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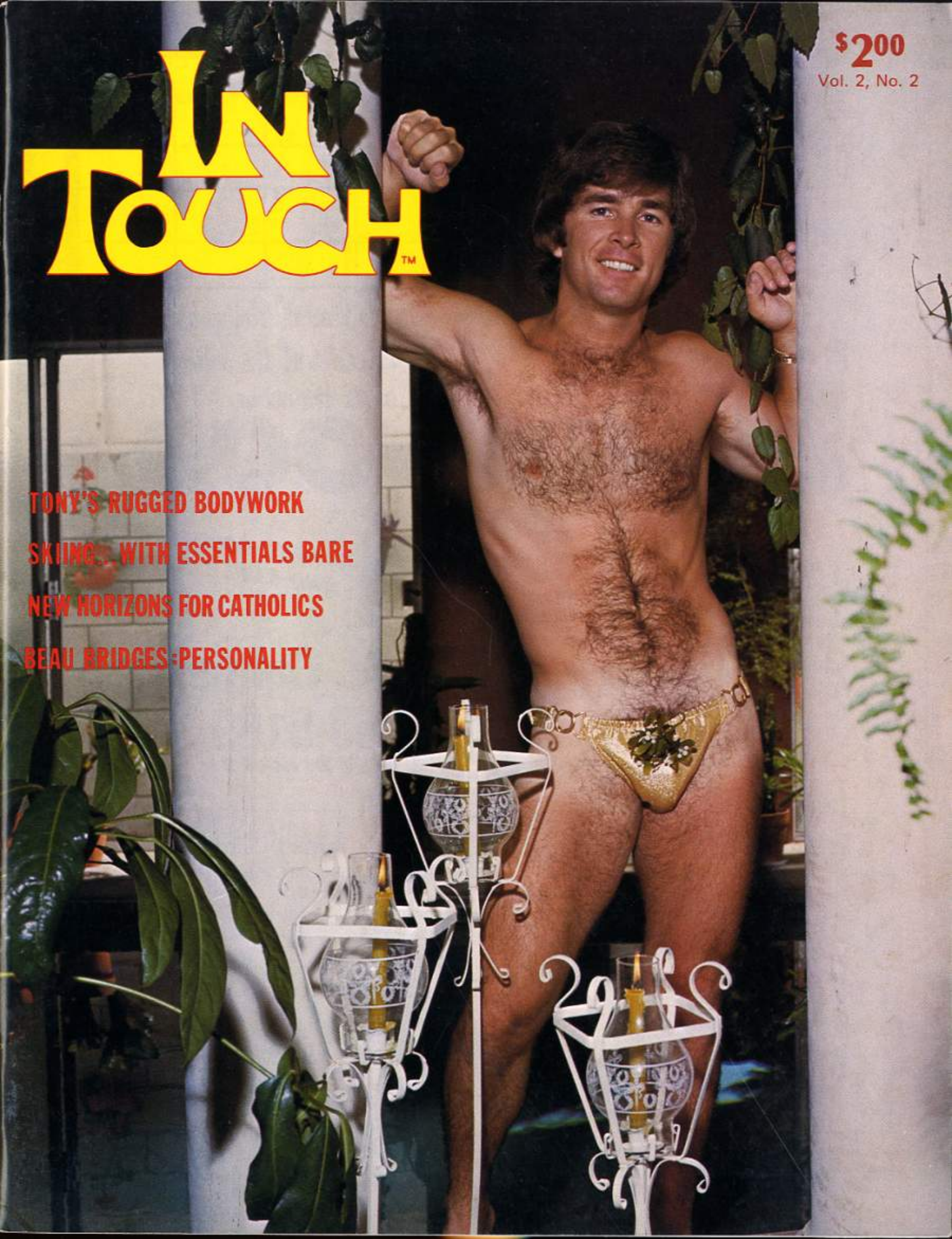
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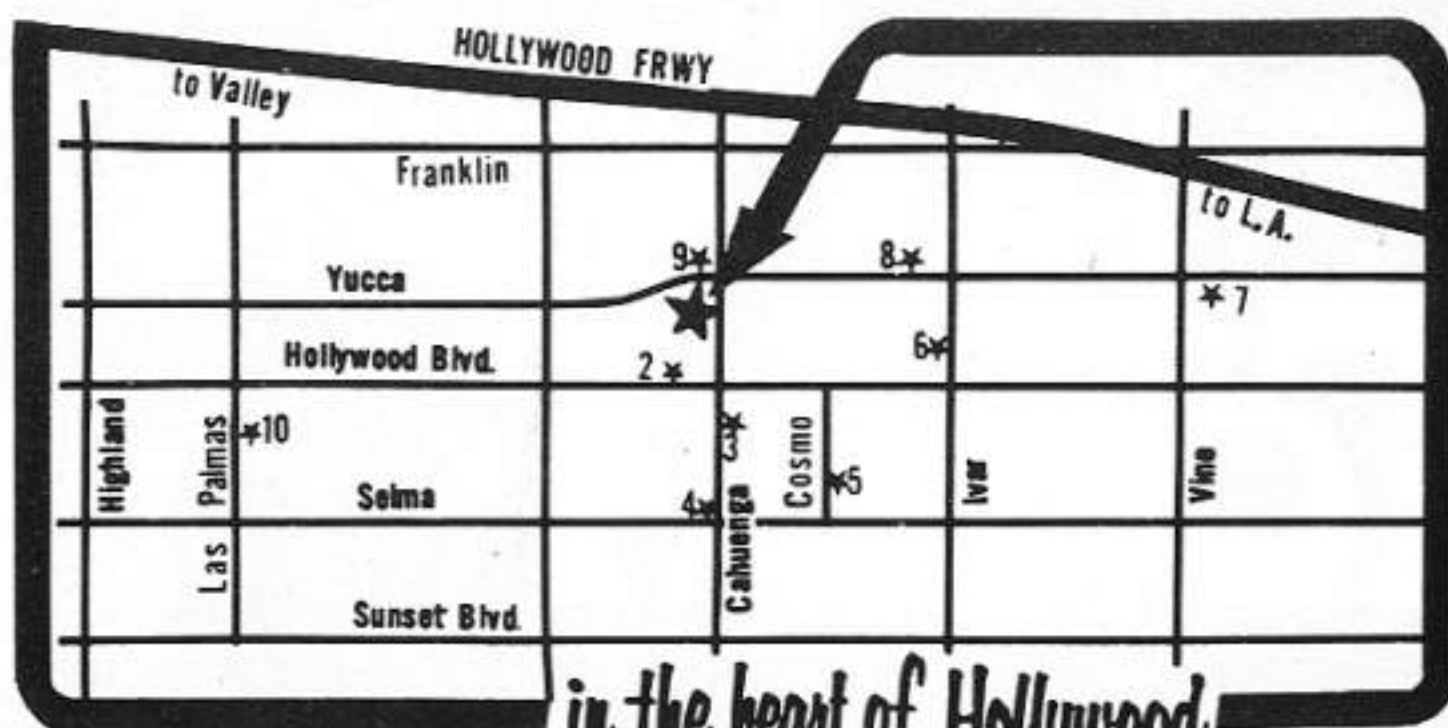
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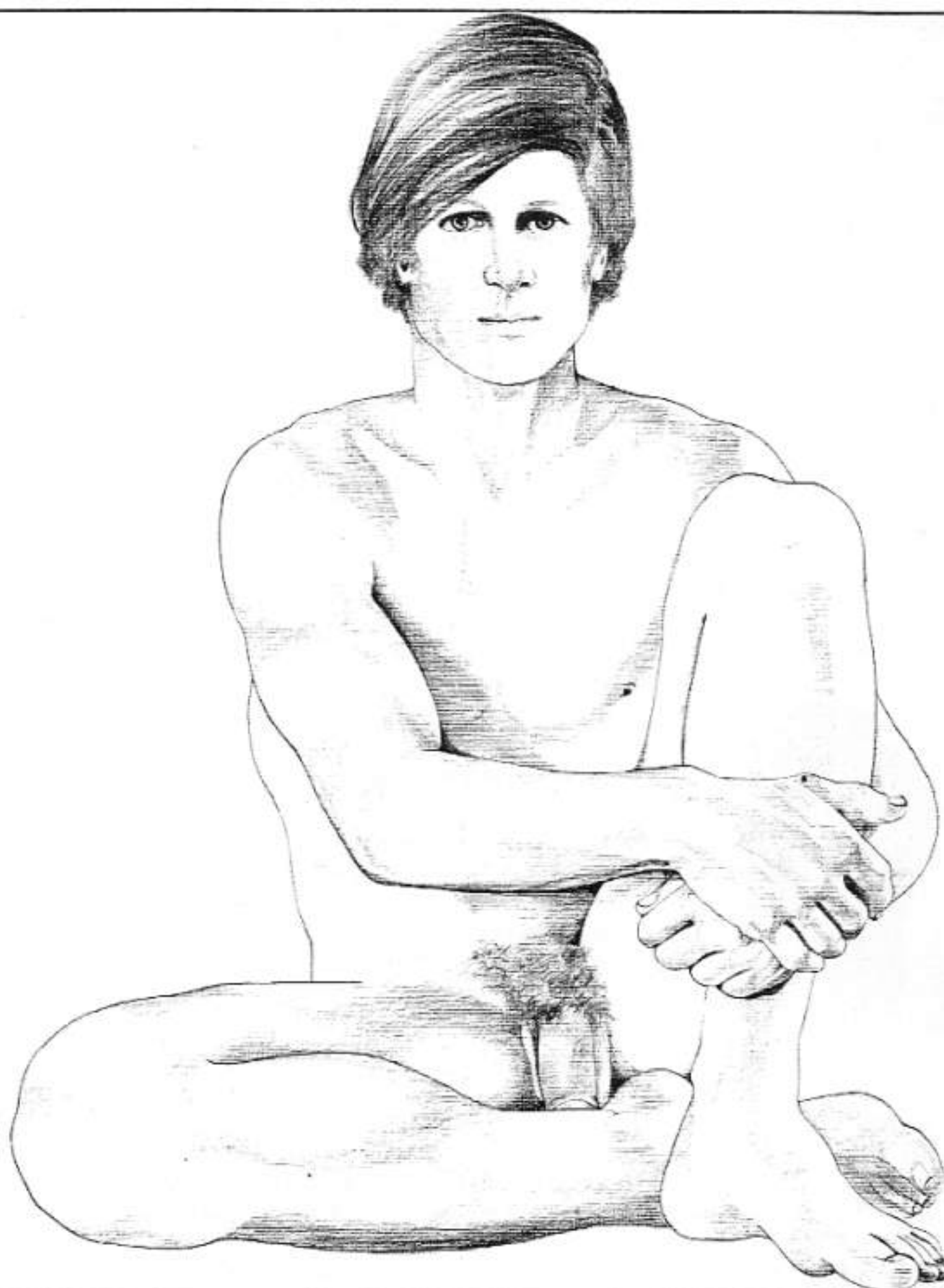
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# IN TOUCH

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 2

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THE COVER: Doug Alexander poses in an outfit from *That Look* with more to look at on page 56.

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# keeping *IN TOUCH*

## MAD AT US

Sir:

Although I feel that IN TOUCH is a superb magazine, I want to know why there has been so little coverage devoted to drag. How about a feature article on a female impersonator, with pictures. Don't you think your readers are a little tired of the same boring nudes? We are very much in demand when it comes to providing the laughs, but totally ignored as far as serious magazine or article coverage is concerned.

Tiger Lily From Texas

Dear Lil:

Thanks for your letter. Our policy has always been to keep all aspects of gay life IN TOUCH with our readers. We have given quite a bit of coverage to female impersonators, but our mail runs about ten to one for more space devoted to in depth studies of rising young gay guys. We're not downgrading the role of the female impersonator, we're only trying to give our readers what they ask for.

—ED.

## COMING OUT

Dear Sir:

I don't know if my problem will be strange to you but it is very difficult for me. I am coming out, as it were, for the first time in my life. The problem comes up when I tell you I am thirty-nine years old, married to a woman I love very much, and the father of three lovely children. I suppose I've always been gay, but I've always managed to hide it from myself and my family.

Recently, I took a business trip to the coast with a young colleague of mine, and after a drunken evening on the town we got back to our hotel room and wound up having sex. I could have written it off as part of a drunk, but we had sex the next night too and this time we were stone cold sober. The guy I work with is very attractive and wants to continue the relationship now that we are back home.

My feelings are very mixed. I've never enjoyed sex as much as I do with this guy, but I think I'm probably too old to come out and begin thinking of changing my whole life. I don't want to hurt my wife or

my children, and I need some advice.

John A.

Dear John:

There are many men who have faced the same problem you are facing right now and some have been older than you! You will have to weigh what is most important for you. Do you want to be gay or do you want to stay married? If you feel that your life is an unhappy one and you must change it in order to find some peace, then get some counseling from a psychiatrist who isn't biased against gays. I'm cautioning you here because the area you are writing from is known for its oppression of gays. And I'm also thinking of the rejection you might receive from your family should you disclose your feelings about yourself. But as far as I can see the most important thing for you to consider is what will provide you with the greatest amount of personal contentment, and this is a question only you can answer. Good luck!

—ED.

## HAPPY DAD

Dear Sir:

As a father who had a lot of trouble getting over the guilt and contempt I first felt when my son told me he was gay, I want to stop and praise the fine work your magazine is doing in bringing the gay experience to your readers. My son gave me a subscription when I finally agreed to meet him on his terms and accept him for what he is. IN TOUCH has helped me to see that being gay isn't an aberration, and that there are many fine people who are gay and who are making many important contributions to our society. Keep up the good work!

A Proud Dad Now

Thanks for writing. We are proud to publish your letter, and we hope your son will be proud when he sees it!

—ED.

## TAILSPIN

Dear Sir:

I am twenty-four years old and I think I'm straight. I've been making it with a very bright airline stewardess. Last week I asked her to marry me, and she informed

me that she was a lesbian. Now I'm beginning to have some doubts about my own masculinity. If I could be making it with a girl who digs girls doesn't it mean that I really would rather be making it with a guy?

Martin S.

Dear Martin:

The fact that you have been going with a lesbian shouldn't make you doubt your own masculinity. You haven't been fooled, because obviously the young lady must have enjoyed your company or she wouldn't have slept with you. If you're having real doubts then I suggest you experiment, but don't put yourself on the block because your former girlfriend is gay. There are plenty of other fish in the sea for you to choose from. Be glad you have had this experience. Let it broaden you rather than get depressed over it. After all, variety is the spice of life.

—ED.

## KEPT MAN

Dear Sir:

I'm eighteen years old and in love with a guy who is twenty-three. He wants me to move in with him and has agreed to pay all the bills while I'm in beauty school, but only if I sign a paper that promises I won't go out and trick. I think this is ridiculous. I don't know what the future will provide in the way of outside sex and neither does he. He says my attitude shows a lot of immaturity. Does it?

Gary K.

Dear Gary:

Your lover seems to show more signs of immaturity than you do. Signing a paper that guarantees you will be faithful doesn't make very much sense. It certainly couldn't be considered morally or legally binding. It sounds like a silly idea. What you ought to do is get yourself a part time job and put yourself through beauty school. Working for something on your own power would insure that you stick with it, and would create fewer problems between you and your lover.

—ED.

## SUGAR DADDY

I have been living alone and hating it. The bar scene doesn't thrill me and I hate one night stands. I'm 23, quite good looking and have a nice build, but I'm shy. Living next door to me is a man about 40 who has taken a great liking to me. On my third visit to his apartment, he em-

Continued on Page 6



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## KEEPING IN TOUCH / Continued

braced me and admitted he wanted to have sex. I wasn't shocked or even disturbed with the situation, but just could not turn on to him. Now he is inviting me in to see nude films, stag films and erotic pictures, hoping I will rise to the occasion long enough for him to satisfy his urge. The last offer was money . . . which I desperately need (they are about to repossess my car). Does this make me "trade"? I do feel guilty about the whole idea, but I am in need of some help. What should I do?

Worried Paul

Dear Paul:

*From as far back as sex itself, the beauty of youth has to be paid for in one way or another. Twenty years or more from now, you may have to pay for it. If he is able to help you financially, it's better he pay you than rent himself a stranger for a few hours who might rip him off. In any event you are not in an enviable situation, it's always better to be financially independent. Good luck.*

—ED.

## END OF AN AFFAIR

Dear Sir:

I am twenty-eight years old and breaking up with my lover after nearly six years. It seems he has met someone else and finally decided to tell me about it. I can't begin to tell you in words how broken up I am about the whole thing. It never occurred to me that he was dissatisfied with the arrangement we had. I have never been with anyone else since we've lived together. I thought my lover was equally faithful. Obviously I was wrong. We are in business together and now we are going through the process of dissolving our partnership. It is all very ugly, and at times the pain is so intense that I'm not sure I will ever recover.

I guess the reason I'm writing is I feel I need some advice to help me get through the mess I seem to be in. My friends feel that I should be going out to bars and meeting new people, but I haven't been in a gay bar with the object of cruising in years. I'm afraid I wouldn't know where to begin. Besides all I can think about are ways to get my lover back which seems a very hopeless pursuit. The business is going downhill fast because I just haven't had the inclination to get to work. My life just seems to be over, and I hate the fact that I'm gay. Even as I sit and write this I

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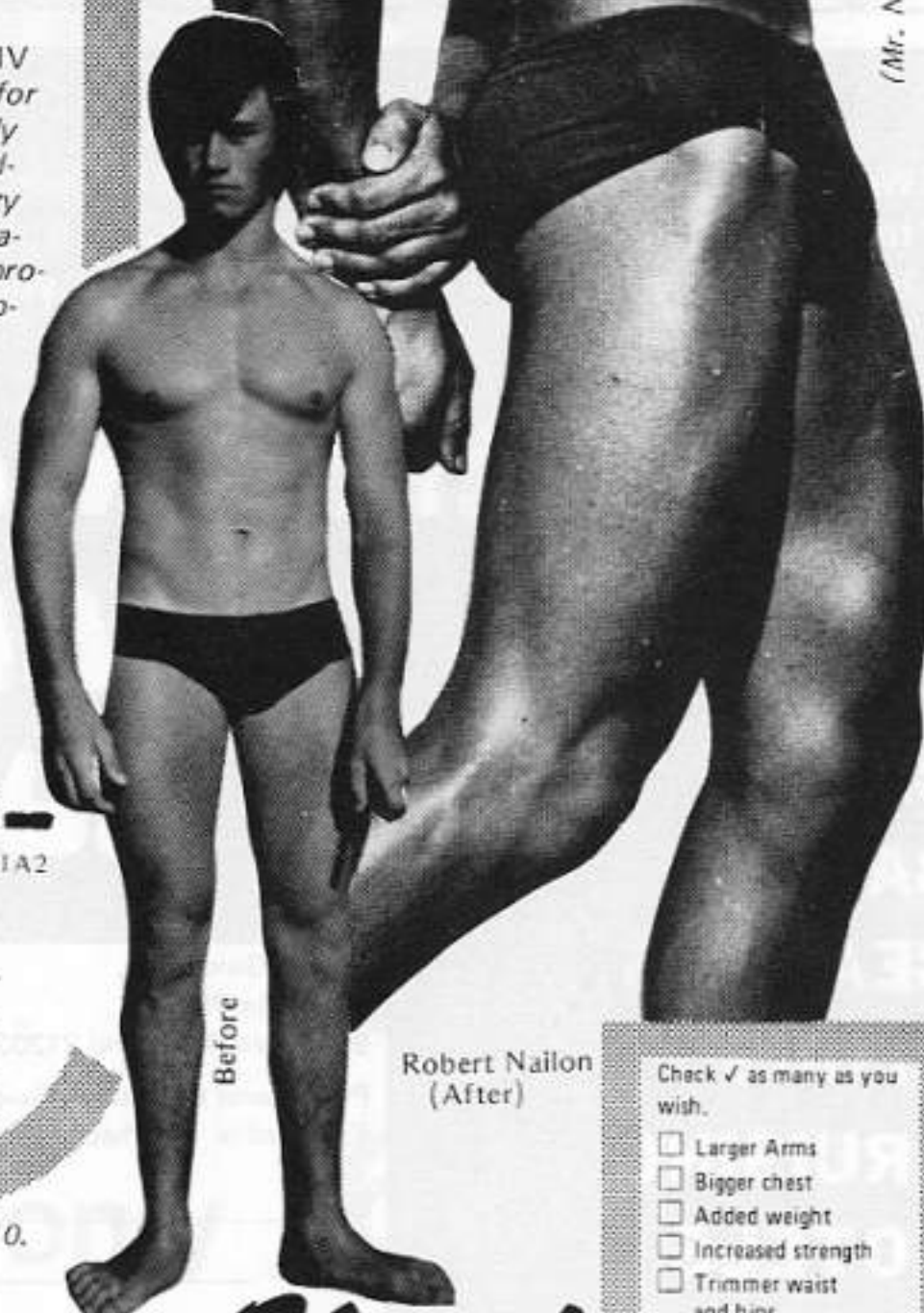
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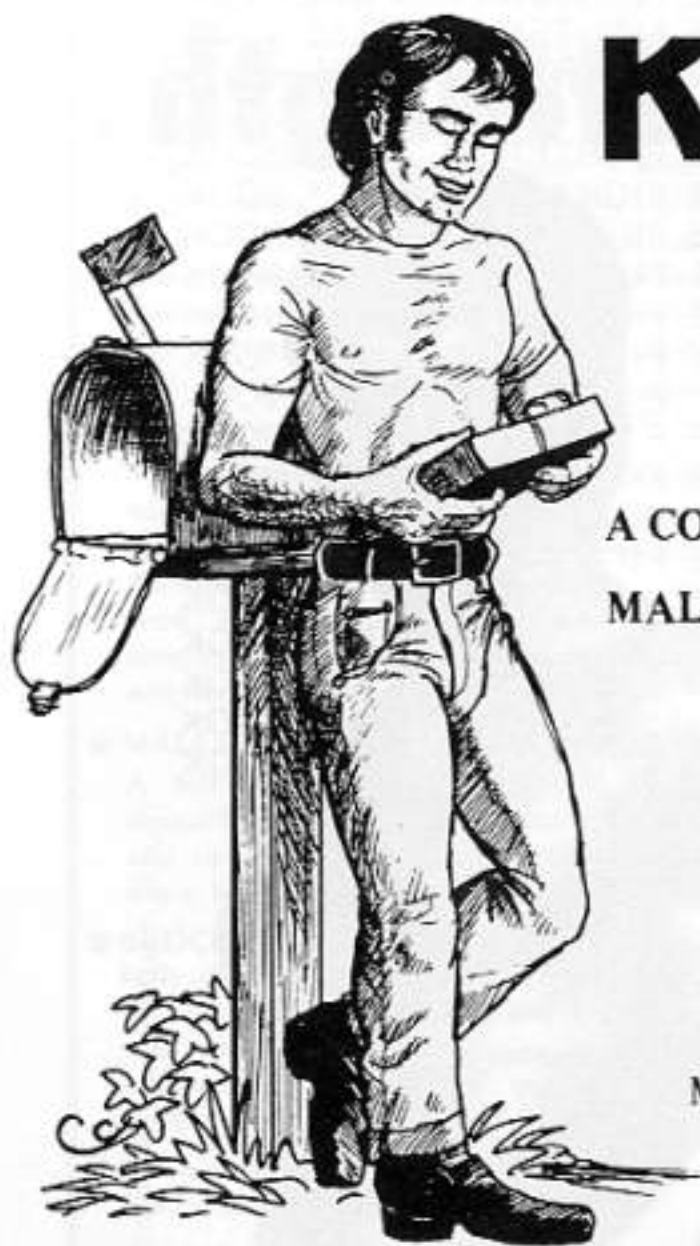


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### KEEPING IN TOUCH / Continued

feel it's probably a complete waste of time. I'll probably send it. But I don't see much point. I suppose I'm in the same boat as every other faggot and I just don't have the guts to admit it.

Don J.  
St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Don:

First let's start with your hating the fact that you're gay. Your relationship could have ended in divorce or a breakup if you were attached to some girl and deeply involved in a heterosexual relationship. The fact that you are gay doesn't necessarily signal that a relationship won't last. There are many gay marriages, just as there are many straight marriages, that are viable and lasting. Yet, no matter how intense a relationship may appear to one partner, if it is not as intense for both then something must be wrong. I think you have to pull up the reins on the self pity you are indulging in and take a long look at yourself.

Something was wrong with the relationship you had before your lover wandered away from the nest, and it is important that you examine what it was. Were you communicating on the same level? Were you giving an ear to your lover if and when he needed to talk to you? Was your business partnership something that made both of you happy? These are certainly questions you need to raise, and you probably need professional counseling to look at them in their proper perspective. If there is a local Gay Community Services Center in your area, you should contact them as soon as possible and they will put you on the right track.

Then once you've got some counseling to right your shaky perspective you can listen to your friend's advice. I'm not telling you to jump into a bar scene that might turn you off even when you are at your best, but nothing can be accomplished if you are going to sit at home and mope about being rejected. There are alternatives. Find out what they are. Not all gay people spend the majority of their time in bars.

When you stop denigrating the gay experience, and blaming it as the cause of all your problems you'll find you're on the right track.

It would also be nice if we could hear from other gay guys out there who have had good solid relationships they are proud of.

—ED.

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# InTouch with the stars

## Scorpio "THE MYSTERIOUS"

During November you will be on a threshold of many new exciting events. A change will definitely take place in your ways of thinking and life with Uranus entering your sign. Scorpio, you will also be feeling stronger, more optimistic and very energetic with a great ability to forge

ahead to obtain your deep desires. Your love life will seem to take a new brighter road with many handsome guys paying attention to you. However, Scorpio, with all the new events entering into your life, you must be on guard against sudden accidents which may come without warning.

### First Decan October 23rd- November 3rd

This particular month you will be feeling in better spirits than other times. Now you early Scorpio's take a deep breath, for you have a rather active month ahead. The fireworks will definitely be going off with Uranus flying over your Sun in late

November. Venus, also over your Sun, can cause many affectionate reactions to come your way. This is also an excellent time to make home improvements and to expand on your education because of the Saturn and Jupiter aspects.

### Second Decan November 4th-November 13th

Venus makes the strongest aspects to your Sun at this time so your love life will be of prime importance. New dramatic changes in your romantic relationships are indicated. On the whole this is a favorable time, but guard against overindulgence in

drugs and alcohol. It can cause health problems. There are possibilities that you may be moving to a new apartment or home. The opportunities will be there, Scorpio, it is up to you to take them.

### Third Decan November 14th-November 23rd

Your love life should take a gigantic swing for the better with Venus in your sign. Your social life will also have a brighter outlook. This is a time you should build up strength, courage and a hopeful

outlook toward the future. It will be a rather tranquil and peaceful time, late Scorpio, in which all the pleasures will be yours. Just let things flow in their natural course.

## Sagittarius "THE ARCHER"

Inwardly you feel more calm and peaceful, with a desire to spend more time getting to know yourself. You'll probably review the last two years of your life in quiet meditations and plan better future goals. Your social life, Sagittarius, will be

rather exciting at this time with many small parties and get-togethers. It will make time go by quickly. However, money may cause some minor problems. Watch your extravagant impulses.

## Capricorn "THE ACHIEVER"

This November will be the time to try to forget problems and enjoy yourself. There will be much activity with your friends, but guard against losing your temper with them. You'll be feeling that lovers are more considerate and kind to you now. At this time you'll also find yourself doing

much to improve your work conditions, but try not to speak too bluntly to your boss as it won't help matters. You may be meeting some new exciting people so allow yourself plenty of time to enjoy the days ahead.

## Aquarius "THE UNIVERSAL"

During November you may find yourself throwing a lot of energy into improving your professional status. Mars in Scorpio may cause you to boil over with steaming lava towards your boss. Watch yourself carefully now or you may find yourself involved in unexpected

arguments. Venus may bring you some new affairs; however, I would not build up hopes since they may just end up being one night stands. Your passions will be fiery this month, but don't let yourself get carried away. You must guard against deceptions.

## Pisces "THE DREAMER"

This will be a more mellow time to soothe your deep emotions. Venus and Mars will trine your Sun giving you an

energetic boost toward getting something done about situations involving work, finances and love. You'll feel much



stronger and affectionate probably giving every guy you know a kiss, and perhaps more. With all the favorable aspects this

### Aries "THE ADVENTURER"

The finances of your lover or roommate may cause you some needless worry, but you'll be making out quite well financially. Sex life for you hot-blooded Arians will also be quite busy. Mars will be burning up much of it's midnight oil for you. As far

### Taurus "THE DETERMINED ONE"

This month you'll feel strong planetary effects through the close relationships surrounding you. As Uranus enters Scorpio, Taurians will feel a tremendous change in your attitudes toward romantic relationships. You'll find yourself genuinely concerned about the emotions of your

### Gemini "THE VERSATILE TWINS"

Your active pace of life, Gemini, will slow down a lot this November. If your work has seemed boring lately, there may be possibilities for a change as Uranus enters Scorpio. You may even find yourself working harder and spending more time working overtime. So, it seems much of

### Cancer "THE EMOTIONAL CRAB"

A new love affair may be entering your life since the sun is now in your solar fifth house. Venus and Mars trines your Sun giving you exuberant energy, illuminating those sad lunar eyes of yours, and attracting many a sexy guy. Saturn's placement will help you to establish a long-lasting

### Leo "THE PROUD LION"

Flaming Mars in Scorpio can make you regal lions roar yourselves into some gigantic misfortune, especially at home if you don't watch to keep control of your temper. During this active month, many Leo's will be doing some serious house cleaning probably throwing out some unwanted relatives or friends. It is a great

### Virgo's "THE NATURAL HARVESTOR"

Many Virgos will be enjoying this month. It will be a rather mellow period when Virgos will be spending more time reading, writing and other intellectual pursuits. Watch your mail box! There may be some surprises in the mail. However, try

### Libra "THE BALANCED ONE"

Venus may be showering you with gifts and unexpected cash this month. You may be getting a raise, but you'll probably squander it on foolish items. It'll be better if you try to stay within your budget at this time. Saturn will still be causing much

month you can get away with it. Your sex life will shoot up much this November, so use all the good events wisely.

as a long-lasting relationship though, the chances are low this month. Saturn may still cause some Arians minor problems, especially those directed toward family matters of home and property.

lovers or close friends. They'll seem much more affectionate and kinder to you now. However, you must guard against little jealousies or you'll find yourself involved in thundering arguments. Try to cooperate with persons close to you. Don't be stubborn. Try to maintain peaceful vibrations.

your energy will be spent on your career. Through using patience at work, you'll prevent needless arguments with fellow workers. It also looks like your love life will slow down a little now so don't expect any wild affairs.

relationship. Your creative touch may flare causing you to begin some new artistic and musical project. There are many indications that you may be spending more of your time and money seeing concerts and movies.

time to move or to redecorate your home. Venus will make it easier for you to meet some guys; however, the stars aren't promising anything special. It's making some heavy aspects to your Sun so be satisfied with what you have because the planetary patterns will be changing next month.

to be careful of accidents while you are driving around your neighborhood as Mars is in your solar third house. Virgo, this is a favorable time to move or to make big changes in your life, if you desire.

restrictions in your advancement in your profession. You may be prone to be more talkative than usual, and your nerves will have a tendency to be hyped up. It may not be easy but you should make a strong effort to remain calm now.

—Donn Demain

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# IN TOUCH comments

Our Puritan forebears felt that in a world so unhappy, it was a sin and shame to laugh or smile. And many of us there are who recoil from the word gay as if so light-hearted a description of ourselves would betray our tragic condition.

We live, it is true, in a troublesome world. International inflation makes the new President's mugwump pieties sure guarantors of economic crisis. High crimes against the nation are astonishingly pardoned before being charged, while tens of thousands languish in jails for the most trivial of victimless crimes. And Gays certainly have a share of those troubles. But it hardly justifies the puritan demeanor which some of our leaders demand of us. While we contend with prejudice, unfair laws, psychopathic police chiefs, and politicians some of whom forget us after we have helped elect them, I do not think that we are duty-bound to wear long faces or to shun all entertainment.

This may seem self-evident to the average reader. But from the Metropolitan Veterans Benevolent Association in New York in the late Forties to the Society for Individual Rights in San Francisco today, many a gay group has been torn by serious friction between those refusing to sacrifice one cent raised by parties or stage shows to support legal aid, counseling, law reform and public education, and those who see the socials as having no purpose whatever other than as fund-raisers for more serious purposes.

The gay movement has some serious tasks to perform: to change the law, to help repair those who have been wrecked by hostile families, by religious hate, by venal therapists, often by disgrace and prison, to improve the public image of Gays, to elect enough friendly politicians that some of them will make the breakthroughs, to teach Gays and the world the truth about the gay heritage, to build the resources of the gay

community. . . .

And I certainly know how those who are working at some of these jobs can feel that the rest of the gay community doesn't care, that they are willing to sit back and let someone else do all the work, take all the risks, make all the sacrifices—only to be faced with the sort of cruel and irresponsible accusation which young radicals threw at the organizers of this year's Christopher Street parade and carnival in Los Angeles: a leaflet accusing the Parade Committee of being profiteers and ripoff artists, when the Committee ended up deep in the red, and committee members would not have profited even if the carnival had made money.

But it wasn't only the alleged profiteering that our fly-by-night radicals objected to: true Puritans, they objected to the carnival itself as being an improper commemoration of a serious occasion. Let us all put on sackcloth and ashes and march down the street and let the world know we are serious.

I say rather, let us tell the world we are gay, and that in our gayness, some of us also are determined, some of us respectable, some of us competent, some of us stable, some of us devout, some of us revolutionary, some of us outrageous, some of us frivolous—but all of us gay.

This writer doesn't enter easily into the spirit of gay occasions. I was too well trained by my own puritan upbringing. But I am convinced that more than law reform, our community needs the sort of educational and social activities which will entice more homosexuals out of their dark closets of fear, shame and self-contempt, to face the world with pride and with camaraderie and joy.

Our activists also need to be reminded that not all Gays who fail to show up for activist affairs are "unliberated" or in the "closet." It is unfortunately true that many activists are still hung up on shame, on puritan motivations, which they try to overcome by gay sloganizing. I don't oppose that—if it works, good. But they sometimes mistake their sloganizing and the treadmill of activist work for liberation, and miss the fact that some of those Gays out in the bars and baths and balls are already liberated—are beyond the need of slogans and marches.

—JIM KEPNER

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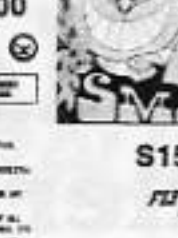
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Have you ever asked that question? Come on, be honest. Of course you have. I don't think there's ever been a person that was interested in developing his body that at one point hasn't asked that.

To an experienced bodybuilder, such a question seems ridiculous and to try to answer it would be just as ridiculous. Who can determine how fast a person's body will develop. If time spent working out were the main factor in determining body development, then why is it the physique contests are often won by guys that have trained for a shorter period of time than the losers?

What is it these select few have that enable them to build their bodies far better than their competition in a shorter period of time? Is it heredity?

Yes, somewhat. Sadly enough, our body development is restricted by this factor. But bad genetics can be overcome to an extent. Too many would-be body beautifuls use this as an excuse for their lack of discipline.

What about discipline? I believe discipline or the lack of it is the prime factor in determining the extent of how well a person develops his body.

Discipline can be used in three areas that work together to give us the type body we want. The first area is diet.

It has been said "We are what we eat." And it does hold true. For if we were to eat lean in calories, high protein, muscle building food, we become lean and muscular. But if we eat heavy in calories, low in protein, non-muscle building food,

we're going to become heavy and non-muscular. Therefore it is essential to discipline our eating habits.

The second area is regular workouts. How often you workout is vitally important. Bodybuilding is nothing more than breaking down the old muscle tissue and building back newer stronger tissues. The amount of time needed to build back this new tissue varies with each individual. For myself, at least three days must pass between workouts on a particular muscle group — any less time results in a bad workout since my muscle hasn't fully recovered from the previous workout. We must also be careful to not let too much time pass between workouts also, because when the new muscle is not used it degenerates. So a happy medium must be reached and adhered to if you want the most out of your workouts.

The third area requiring discipline is workout intensity. Some people seem to think if they enter a gym regularly, move the weights around a little and maintain a good diet, something good is bound to happen to their physique. When they don't get the results they want, they quit in disgust and claim they weren't meant to have a good body. "Poor baby." This type, more than any other is in trouble, for it's relatively easy for someone to maintain a good diet and workout regularly, but without the sweat and hard work, it takes to tear down those muscles, how can there be any new growth?

There you have it now. The answer to that eternal question asked of bodybuilders. "I think."

—JIM CASSIDY



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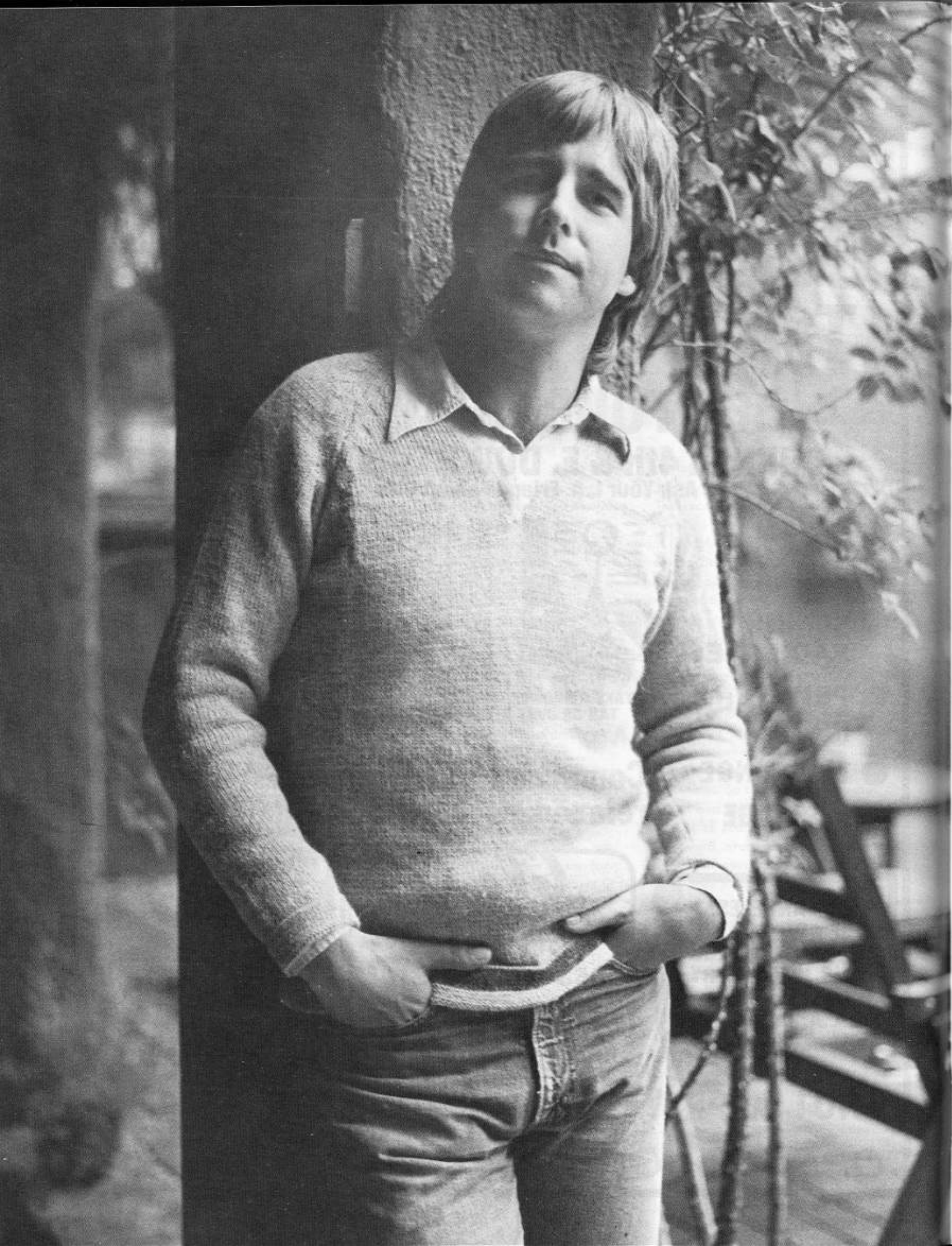
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BY ALLAN LEOPOLD

# BEAU BRIDGES AT BUTTERFIELDS



**"I'd** rather keep my personal life private. That's why I've never sought out interviews."

The voice on the other end of the telephone belonged to one of the hottest young box office stars in the movies and he was responding to my request to conduct our interview at his home. So I arranged to meet him at one of the popular Strip restaurants and, as luck would have it, the day dawned grey and cold. Butterfields is known for its Patio Dining and we would have to lunch inside by the fire.

I glanced upward. It was getting darker by the minute and a cold wind sliced across the driveway presaging rain. Just as I was feeling gloomiest, a white car pulled up and I would have recognized the driver anywhere. Beau (which means beautiful in French) was dressed in a pair of faded blue jeans, wooden Swedish loafers on his feet. Hardly the picture of a glamorous movie star but, then, this actor has never consciously played that role. He just considers himself a lucky guy who had a relative open the door for him into the Business.

"Hi," he called out. "Sorry I'm late. May I bring my guitar?"

On this flip note I got out my pencil and began to jot down the amazing chronicle of an irrepressible spirit, an elfin personality that lives every minute to the fullest. Beau doesn't fit any pattern. He's thrown out the blueprints and made his own. He'll do whatever moves him on the spur of the moment regardless of what his public image may be and he rides the crest of this skylarking, nose-thumbing attitude in tandem with his kid brother, Jeff. The two of them are a team and they have stormed the battlements of Hollywood and ridden off with the Spoils. Together, they divide up the lion's share of the juiciest film roles around.

Beau first saw the light of day behind boarded-up windows at Cedars of Lebanon Hospital December 9, 1941, two days after Pearl Harbor. Everyone thought we were going to be invaded so these precautions were taken and the hospital was blacked out. Six years later Lewis Milestone, a good friend of the family, cast him in John Steinbeck's "The Red Pony." This led to a major role

in "Zamba" with Jon Hall shot the same year. The script (they just don't write these plots anymore) called for him to be dropped in a parachute from a burning plane over the jungle. After this venture, Little League Baseball began to the anonymity of Mar Vista Grammar School. Later on, when he and Jeff were at Venice High together, they were working on Neil Simon's "Come Blow Your Horn." They needed some practice before a live audience so they cooked up a wild idea. They hired a flatbed truck and drove over to the local Supermarket where, before the startled eyes of shoppers, they proceeded to perform the whole of Simon's play.

"Would you attempt this today now that you are both big stars?"

Beau didn't hesitate.

"Sure, why not? Jeff and I are liable to do anything. After high school I went right into the Coast Guard Reserve. Thank goodness for that. It kept me out of the war. When I turned seventeen I started at UCLA, first in a general course, then later in the Cinema Department. I bought a European Ari-S 16mm, Sound Movie Camera with a Zoom lens and began to learn the technical end of movies. And I got my career going again. I did two segments for my dad's series: "Sea Hunt." In one I played a thief who hid out in a storm drain. In another I played the role of a Peace Corps husband whose wife was dying in childbirth. Of course my dad arrived in the nick of time to save her. That series ran for five years and the Reruns are still going strong. Casting people began noticing me and, after "My Three Sons" with Fred MacMurray, I wound up doing fifty guest shots on various TV shows. In between, dad taught me how to Scuba Dive and the family joined him in Nassau in the Bahamas, off the Florida keys, Hawaii, Catalina and Malibu. I have a sister you don't hear much about. Her name's Cindy and she goes to an art school in Santa Barbara. She's a fantastic artist and she's given me a couple of her paintings. She used to tag along with her easel and brushes and she was the only member of the family on dry land while all the rest of us were under water.





At the age of 22, I went to the University of Hawaii for a semester. When I got back, Larry Peerce asked me to do "The Incident." It was my first big movie break and I worked with that great lady, Thelma Ritter. After this I did the lead in William Inge's play, "Where's Daddy?" It was a failure but, out of it, came the part of the weird, freaky brother in "For Love of Ivy" with Sidney Poitier. Would you like to hear me play the guitar?"

Beau sat on the cold steps and began to tune up. He started to strum idly with his fingers, then he warmed to the occasion, kind of half closed his eyes and played and sang a delightful song by John Prynne.

"My brother, Jeff, composes music. Did you know that? He's sold a lot of his stuff to the movies. He's really good. Let's see. Where were we? Oh yes. "Ivy." After "Ivy," Norman Jewison called me for "Gaily Gaily." This was a picture on a really big budget. There were some good people in it: Melina Mercouri, Brian Keith, George Kennedy, Margot Kidder. Margot got the part after I went to bed with five other girls. I mean, I tested with them."

Beau smiled and wrinkled that famous nose.

"You know, the director wanted to see which girl would be best for the part by gauging how she handled the seduction scene. It was funny spending a day in bed with a bunch of girls I didn't even know. Margot is supposed to be eighteen in the picture. She's really twenty-six and she tears my clothes off. This had never happened to me before and it was kind of bizarre. Running around without your clothes on in front of a whole lot of people. But the best thing that happened to me on that movie was getting the chance to meet Ben Hecht, the writer, whose idea the whole thing was. They adapted his book *Child of the Century* for the film and movies are really a writer's medium anyway. I did "The Landlord" for Sidney Lumet next. It's my favorite picture. Pearl Bailey was in it, Diana Sands (who died recently of Cancer); Lou Gossett, Lee Grant and Susan Anspach. Hal Ashby directed and he's great. Every actor likes to travel so when my agent offered me "Adam's Woman" to be made in Australia, I jumped at the chance. I got to surf and scuba dive down there and to work with English actors like John Mills and Jane Merrow. We shot in and around Sydney. It's really a barren land, the Last Frontier in fact, and it was all brand new to me. The picture was an old-fashioned romantic love affair and it didn't do too well at the box office and it's never been released here. I saw some Koala bears, ate some bland English-type food. You know, not too spicy, and sort of played the role of tourist."

"Speaking of food," I interrupted, "How about some lunch?"

"Great!"

Beau gathered up his guitar and we went inside to the crackling fire. We had no sooner been seated when two diners came by to congratulate Beau on "The Landlord." He acknowledged their compliments with sincere good grace. No airs, no pretences for this boy. After ordering, Beau sat back over a glass of wine, put his fingers together, and meditated a moment.

"I guess "Child's Play" came next and I worked again for Sidney Lumet. I really had to get in condition for the part of the young Gym Instructor so I went into rigorous training just as Jeff did to play the fighter in "Fat City." I really took off the weight. I limbered up and did the whole gymnastic routine, weight-lifts and all. I got to know James Mason and he's a marvelously interesting man. I followed this with "The Christian Licorice Store" which went in and out of theatres like a revolving door. My first big flop, I guess."







"I missed that one. Weren't you nude on a trampoline or something?"

Beau grinned like a naughty boy.

"Yeah, come to think of it, I was."

"You mean you jumped up and down and . . ."

The sparks from Beau's eyes were setting off Roman Candles of glee.

"Yeah. I wondered about that when I did it."

"Well, why did you do it then?"

"Floyd Mutrux, the director, asked me to be in it. The script was just kind of an outline but it seemed to me to have a lot of style. Gilbert Roland was in it, talking about the Good Old Days in Hollywood. The famed French director, Jean Renoir, was in it with his wife and they talked about living in L.A."

"What's the meaning of that title?"

"Oh 'The Christian Licorice Store' is where all the lonesome people go to buy their clothes."

"Would you do pornography?"

"I don't think so. Though 'Deep Throat' really cracked me up. I'd do a 'Last Tango in Paris' anytime."

The food arrived and Beau attacked an inviting tureen of steaming hot soup.

"I went down to the Mark Taper Forum after that to do two weeks of Daniel Berrigan's play, 'The Trial of the Catonsville Nine.' I played the part of David Darst who was killed in a car accident just before the trial. This great play was a meaningful experience for me and it renewed my faith in the power of the theatre and my interest in the entire acting profession. I returned to the screen determined to let all the stops out as an actor. I would hold nothing back. And I was getting up into pretty high

company at this point in time. I decided to do 'Hammersmith Is Out' with the Burtons. It was to be directed by Peter Ustinov, that eminent British actor, who had a reputation for permitting actors to do pretty much what they wanted in front of the camera. And my part of Billy Breedlove, the motorcyclist, was going to give me a chance to do some really far-out things. I would get to screw Liz on a box of tomatoes, I would get to go to the Pope, throw my arm around him and say:

"You look a little taller than you do on TV."

"I would get to pick my nose and, oh glory, I would get to bend over, flap my elbows, and fart into the camera."

I put down my fork with all the dignity I could muster as I distinctly remember Beau doing all those things in a film I hadn't admired in the least.

"Aren't you leery of losing your attractive young leading man image?"

Beau chewed on a piece of bread.

"I'm mainly interested in communicating ideas on film."

"But what about the social graces?", I protested weakly.

"I think Social Graces are bullshit and you can quote me on that."

Noting my distress, Beau continued.

"Don't you see, Billy Breedlove was a product of his time? I grew up in the fifties and I understood his problem. The most important thing in life for him was being Numero Uno. When Ustinov systematically destroyed his ego, the only thing he knew how to do in retaliation was to flap his elbows and fart on him."

I sat picking at my food.

"Was that all you?", I inquired edgily.

Beau grinned from ear to ear.







GG-9



Above—In a sharp, funny role on the early adventures of young Ben Hecht, adapted from his novel of the same name, *GAILY, GAILY* (United Artists-1969), BRIDGES showed an adept comedy style. In this scene Malina Mercouri, as Chicago's most famous madame, leads the wide-eyed but determined to succeed, small-town boy down paths of hilarious sin he's never even imagined.

Left—Beau Bridges and Margot Kidder are a little surprised to be caught in bed in the film, *GAILY, GAILY*.

Opposite page—After a series of forgettable films, young BRIDGES finally hit his stride and burst on audiences in *THE INCIDENT* (20th Century-Fox 1968). As a young, wounded soldier from Oklahoma, he was the only person with courage enough to stand up to a pair of late night muggers, (Tony Musante and Martin Sheen) in the New York subways. Even with the other passengers played by a who's who of Hollywood's great character actors—including Thelma Ritter, Jack Gilford, Jan Sterling, Mike Kellin, Gary Merrill, Brock Peters and Ruby Dee—his direct, winning performance garnered him raves and won Screen World's Promising Personality of the Year Award.





A blackly funny comedy concerning a wealthy young man who inherits a slum ghetto apartment house and moves in because he doesn't believe in absentee-landlordism, *THE LANDLORD* (United Artists-1970) was one of the biggest box-office hits of the year. BRIDGES' odd move was done to the consternation of his hilariously haughty mother (played to razor sharp perfection by Lee Grant) and the, at first, open mouthed disbelief, then finally, wicked delight of his slow paying tenants, who included Pearl Bailey (in this scene) and the late Diana Sands. An excellent performance in this big hit film firmly assured BRIDGES' stardom.

"No. I had a little help from the Sound Dept."

"In 'Your Three Minutes Are Up,' you turn suddenly into a savage at the conclusion. Why was that? Didn't you feel your vicious behavior would cost you the sympathy of your audience?"

"That role was fucking tragedy. You mean the climax where I hit that man in the gas station with a credit card machine?"

I nodded.

"When you cut yourself off from pleasure and feeling good for a very long time, anger doesn't come easily. But, when it does, watch out! As an actor I can only make a contribution to the whole. I can only do my best. Of the twelve films I have made, maybe four of them have said what I wanted to say. I've done some television recently I can point with pride to. Things like the ABC Television Series 'My Daddy Lives in a Downtown Hotel,' the story of a divorce as seen through the eyes of a child. Larry Peerce directed me again in 'My Mother's Eyes, My Father's Smile' for TV and I played opposite Meredith Baxter, the girl from the 'Bridget Loves Bernie' series. I have just finished a new Columbia picture for Sidney Lumet. It's to be released in February and it was written by Larry MacMurtry who wrote 'The Last Picture Show.' He adapted it from his novel, Leaving Cheyenne. It's call-

ed 'Loving Molly' and Tony Perkins and Blythe Danner are in it with me. I play a cowboy named John McCloud and it's kind of an Edna Ferber 'Giant' picture. We go from Texas in the twenties to the present day and we all wind up with white hair."

"Tell In Touch readers how to become a star."

"First, have a relative in the business. That always helps. And study. Learn your craft so you'll be comfortable in what you do. I still study at an Actors Workshop called Theatre West. But my dad taught me most of what I know about acting. He's the best teacher any kid could ever hope to have."

"Any other advice?"

"Never anticipate anything. Just let it happen."

"Who are your favorite directors?"

"Hal Ashby, Larry Peerce, Mike Nichols, Sidney Lumet."

"Actors?"

"George C. Scott, Dustin Hoffman, Marlon Brando, the late Montgomery Clift, and of course, my father and my brother are fantastic."

"Do you go to many movie premieres?"

"No. The tuxedo thing stopped for me three or four years ago. I don't have to feel socially in the swing by putting one on."





BRIDGES was ill-used in *HAMMERSMITH IS OUT* (Cinerama-1972). He and blonde-wigged co-star Elizabeth Taylor (in a cafe scene where she worked) were the only bright spots in this muddled, modern retelling of the Faust legend. The other, seemingly disinterested, co-stars were Richard Burton and Peter Ustinov (who also mis-directed the dreary affair). It did give BRIDGES a chance to work with the world famous Burtons and increase still further his growing legion of fans.

"Any favorite sports?"

"Baseball and basketball. Tennis and anything to do with the ocean."

"Any comments about your home life?"

"Let's keep that private, shall we? But I will tell you this. I love kids. We adopted Casey, a racially mixed boy, four years ago. What a joy! I bought him a goldfish and you should have seen the expression on his face! No kind of money can buy that. I've sure learned a lot from him. And, six weeks ago, we had a little boy of our own. We call him Jordan. Gosh, I love kids!"

"Your whole family seems remarkable to me."

"My dad has been very good to me for a great many years. And, as for Jeff, we're getting past the brother-to-brother stage. We're people-to-people now."

A fine drizzle of rain began to fall. Beau picked up his guitar, got into his car, waved goodbye and drove off. I watched until he was a tiny speck in the distance. Then I closed my notepad and walked silently through the rain. I thought to myself:

What a great movie that will be when Lloyd, Beau and Jeff Bridges finally get together. That will be a family affair for the whole world to look forward to. ●



BRIDGES at the reception after the showing of *GAILY, GAILY*.



Not so long ago, any gay Catholic confiding his or her desires or activities to a confessor seriously risked a stunning blast of homophobic vitriol and an order to leave the church forever—which many did.

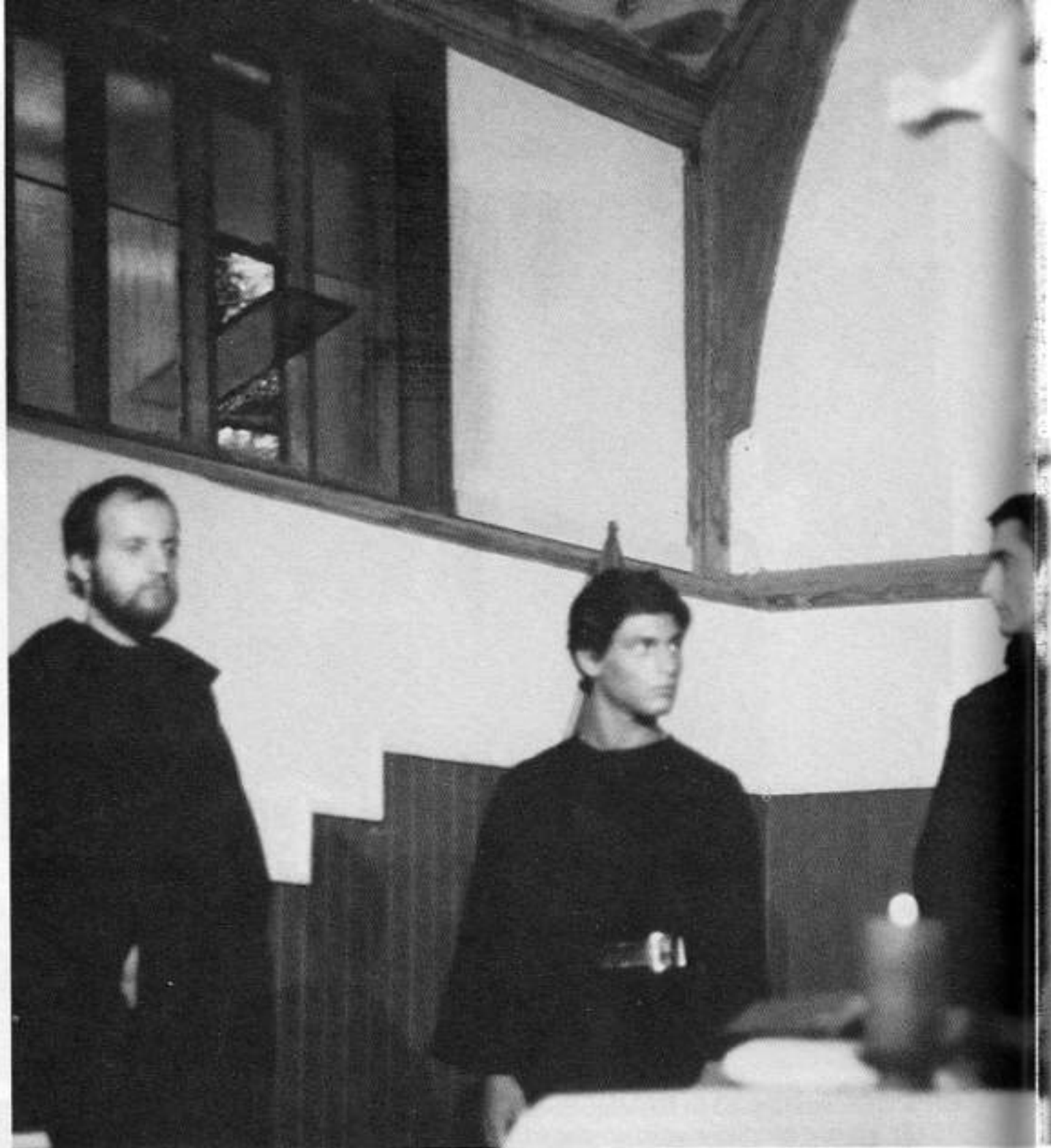
Not all confessors reacted hysterically. Some would say, "Unless you see this behavior as sinful, you needn't confess it," or else, "I don't know how to advise you; go talk to Father X who understands this better."

Many homosexual Catholics believed the omnipresent propaganda that their orientation was a monstrous evil. Others, secure in the integrity of their own feelings, had no urge to confess so far as their being gay was concerned. They knew about uptight confessors (suspecting what led a priest to protest too much) and when they wished to confess to gay-related shortcomings (infidelity, meanness) they either found a sympathetic ear or were circumspect about what they said. Nothing was easier than, "Father, I went to this prostitute. . . ." Less likely to produce a venomous tirade.

But such subterfuge negated the healing purpose of confession—to receive absolution from guilt. If Rome could do no more than denounce their purest expression of human love, many Gays saw no option but to leave the church—a loss whose dimensions can barely be conceived by non-Catholics.

Theologians labeled homosexuality as fundamentally evil. And thousands had formerly been burned by church order on interchangeable charges of heresy, sodomy and witchcraft. The view persisted that Sodom and Gomorrah were punished for homosexual acts and that any city tolerating Gays risked similar fate.

Not that Rome concentrated much on anti-homosexuality. Though monolithic, Catholicism had in most times and places been more able than most Protestants to accommodate to local customs, and most non-Irish Catholics could coexist in a heavily gay neighborhood without excessive friction. A single confessor, hagridden by his own fears and guilts, might be morally devastating to individual Gays, driving them to leave the church, to rush into marriages which could only harm all concerned, or worse, driving them to unbearable guilt, to alcoholism and often



## NEW HORIZONS FOR

to suicide, still, most confessors recognized that all confessants, not just Gays, were sinners.

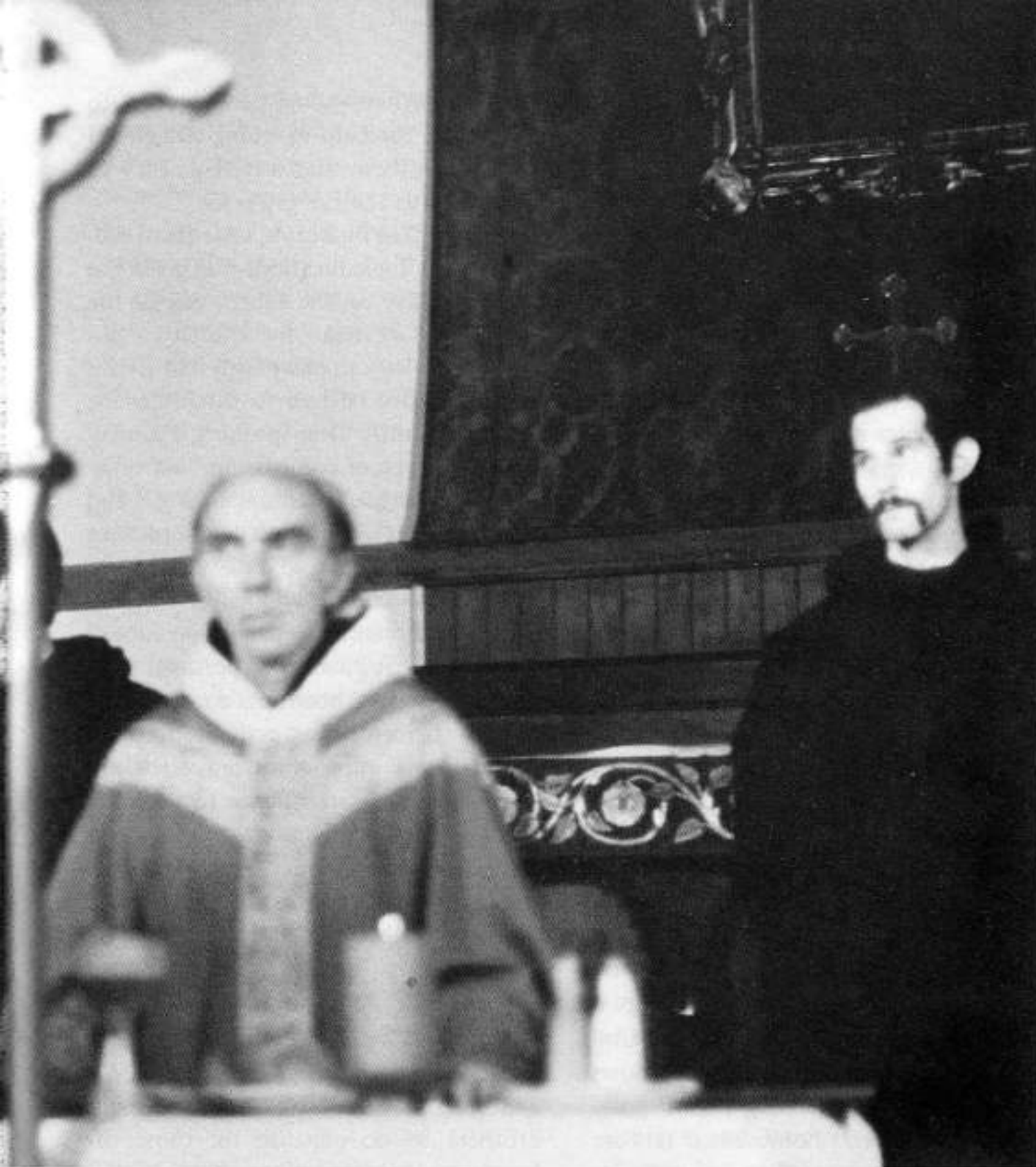
But the self-accepting Gay would not label his love as sinful. He might feel he had sinned in countless ways, even while trying to express that love, but his love was the fountainhead of his goodness. A confessor who regarded the homosexual act per se as sinful (as natural theology taught) could only give absolution if the confessant repented what was judged to be error. The Gay would not repudiate his or her gayness, so without absolution, the saving sacraments of the church were often withheld.

Rome's theological position, based on a few Pauline verses taken out of context, and elaborated by Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century, held that

the "design" of male and female bodies shows nature's intent that they be joined, so any variant sex coupling is "against nature"; further, God commanded mankind (or at least Adam and Eve) to be fruitful and multiply, so any non-procreative sex usage offends God. God at the same time ordered mankind to till the earth, so one might equally regard it a sin for any man not to be a farmer. Clearly a fraction of our population can do enough farming and procreating for us all. But until recently, such practical considerations didn't affect the church's sex doctrine.

For its first thousand years, Rome regarded all sex acts as sinful (i.e., "We are born in sin"; and Mary's "sinless" conception, without a sex act). Husbands and wives, expected to have chil-





# R CATHOLIC GAYS

dren, needed also to confess to sin after coupling, and sin was compounded if they took pleasure in the act. Marriage was for those too weak in faith to enter the celibate elite of the religious orders.

The sin of connubial sex was "licensed" by God's order, and marriage, long regarded simply as a contract of wife-purchase, was celebrated until the 13th century outside the church, by a pagan anti-mass. The church was still feeling the opinion of Jesus and Paul that marriage was only for borderline Christians. Sex within marriage was thus a sinful act serving a needful end. Extramarital sex was both sinful and purposeless. Homosexual acts were seen as additionally unnatural, abominable and a dire threat to the neighborhood.

But as Catholic journalist Michael

Novak mentions in his May 31 *Commonweal* attack on gay liberation, "Some percent of those drawn to the celibate life are latent homosexuals" (and some not-so-latent, he might have added), so, despite anti-gay dogma, many a priest can well understand the dilemma of Catholics with a same-gender love impulse. Gradually, at least among church liberals, who multiplied after the apostolate of the late Pope John, pastoral or counseling attitudes regarding Gays came in line with Catholic thinking about sinners generally, i.e., all men are sinners, and the church while condemning sin must find sincere ways to love and comfort the sinner. And this needn't be as patronizing as it will sound to some.

Central to Christianity is the notion

that all men are sinners, that all sin fatally estranges us from God, but that Jesus' sacrifice erases all guilt, even for the worst of sins. This is Paul's message in Romans and 1 Corinthians, missed by the self-righteous in their headlong rush to use random verses to consign all homosexuals to hell. Paul, read in context, clearly warns his readers not to convict even homosexuals of their sins ("for you the judge are doing the very same things") but to redeem them by removing their guilt burden. Thus, many priests recognized that even if homosexual acts are sinful, the church must reconcile, not condemn.

But until English Catholics in 1956 submitted the Griffin Report to the Parliamentary committee considering law reform, official church opinion on homosexuality retained its uniform negativity. Cardinal Griffin's commission argued that sin, a matter of private morals, is not the law's business; that inequitable and needlessly cruel anti-homosexual laws must be repealed.

Several later Catholic books retained the insistence on the sinfulness of homosexual acts (but not persons) while acknowledging psychological causative theories and historic evidence of the universal creativity of Gays, and elaborating more supportive counseling procedures for use of priests. But when they said that Gays, like cripples or widows, might turn their God-given impediment to social use; that Gays should strive for a life of continence; and that promiscuous Gays were no worse sinners than promiscuous hets, Gays were not grateful. Liberal emphasis gradually swung from sin weighing to pastoral concern, criticizing the sorry logic of condemnation.

By the time Dignity (an organization of self-accepting Gays intending to stay in the church) got its start five years ago in Southern California, several American Catholic periodicals had given partial support to the Quaker view that sex contact, in addition to its occasional procreative function, was a valid expression of interpersonal love, no less moral for being between persons of the same gender. Church liberals increasingly recognized the gay person's special needs, temptations and potential.

Dignity started small and not too aggressive. It now has over 2,000 members and chapters in 22 cities, with sev-



eral more forming. Dignity members, like newly assertive churchwomen, are no longer willing to accept second-class membership in the church.

Dignity was well represented at an early June conference on "The Gay Christian," which I was invited to address at the Marianist order's handsome Bergamo center outside Dayton, Ohio, and they were highly critical of those churchmen who still clung to substantial parts of the old homophobic theology. Boston's Father Tom Oddo, Dignity national secretary, said, "We don't wait for the church to say it's okay [for Gays] to receive the Eucharist. . . . We don't wait for the institutional church to catch up. . . . We will assist the church by going ahead and doing it."

*Commonweal*, a leading but independent Catholic journal, supported this view, commending Dignity's New York/New Jersey chapter (and 28 members of the Jesuit academic community at Woodstock College) for criticism of the Archbishop of New York's attack on Intro 2, the torpedoed gay rights bill. *Commonweal* quoted approvingly the 1971 Bishops' admonition that all church members should prophetically champion the rights of unjustly treated groups and individuals, and the Dignity statement that after centuries of persecution, the time has come for Jesus' spirit to prevail among Catholics . . . to respect the dignity of every person, and to oppose all oppression.

As a non-Catholic who has frequently counseled distressed Catholic Gays, I've been amazed and gratified by the new attitude displayed in the *National Catholic Reporter* and other Catholic journals, just as I was inspired by the great humanity of the late Pope John, and the revolution he unleashed in a church I'd once considered the bulwark of reaction.

The Bergamo Conference, organized by Marianist Father Norbert Brockman to "develop a ministry to homosexuals," was attended mostly by priests and by brothers and sisters in orders, many in campus ministry and some already working with Gays. I recounted both the history of the gay movement and the work of Metropolitan Community Churches, and Dr. Franklin Kameny of Washington Mattachine Society told of gay civil rights struggles. The conference was the most together ses-

sion I've attended in over 20 active years in the gay movement, and it was fully and sympathetically reported both in the *Dayton Journal Herald* and in the *National Catholic Reporter*.

The Novak article already referred to, arguing that "Gay is not liberation," as well as a disappointingly conservative recent Catholic bishop's pronouncement ("Principles to Guide Confessors"), set the conference tone by reaction effect. Most conferees expressed bitter disappointment in the bishop's dated and condescending view that sex is designed solely for procreation and expression of love within marriage, but that confessors should be understanding and even mildly supportive in dealing with persons with homosexual urges.

They felt that the church had quickly to go at least as far as the resolution recently adopted by the National Priests' Federation. Several Milwaukee members of the Gay Ministry Task Force of the Salvatorian order who had helped prepare that resolution were active participants in the Bergamo conference. One, Paris Baldacci, a doctoral candidate in theology at Marquette University, noted that the church shows great stupidity in making public statements that "Overt homosexual acts are immoral but gay people are good people."

Even more critical of the church's self-righteous stance was Boston "street priest" Paul Shanley, a super-dynamic young man who has for years been assigned by the Archdiocese to work with alienated youth. By openly allying himself with first the juvenile delinquents, then the hip and drug culture, now with gay runaways, dressing like them and keeping their hours (no "respectable" priest would be seen on the streets after dinner), he has drawn the ire of conservative elements in the church, who keep calling for his handsome scalp. Asked if he feels comfortable with outcasts, Shanley replies that he no longer feels comfortable with good Catholics, that he prefers being with those who get shoved aside by good "Christians in their mad dash to Heaven. . . . I think the worst indictment I could make against Catholic priests is that they no longer eat and drink with sinners.

"Those who accuse me of saying gay is good misunderstand me," he said. "I am saying that gay is *better*. Better for

Gays. . . . When young people come to me asking for help in 'going straight', I won't help them that way. I will try to help them to achieve gay pride."

Father Dan Pilarczyk, Cincinnati diocesan vicar for education, was given the unhappy task on the fourth day of the conference to detail the church's traditional theological viewpoint, and it was perhaps lucky he had to catch a plane almost instantly after speaking. Kameny called his type of compassion "patronizing, degrading and dehumanizing," and Shanley said, "That kind of acceptance is Alice-in-Wonderland talk unless you personally would willingly place a known Gay into a parish position." Some felt that Pilarczyk's personal position might have been less conservative.

This reporter was prompted to respond by an impromptu prayer before lunch, meant as a challenge to the next theologian scheduled:

"Sisters in fraternity, brothers in sorority: We none of us deny that we sin. We sin against ourselves, against the earth, against God and against each other even while we try to express our most sacred love; we confess our many sins and we try with Jesus' aid and comfort and with the support of our sisters and brothers to do penance for those offenses and shortcomings; but we will not accept the charge that the very heart and spirit of love which is in us, different as it may be from others, is less than loving and beautiful and creative. If this be stiff-necked pride, we pray for guidance so that we may learn to express the special gift of our love with humility."

Richard McCormick, S.J., of Georgetown University, was better received. His theology was less hard-lined, and his emphasis was decidedly more on pastoral work where he insisted that the priest must play a supportive role. If I heard him right, he argued that the church needs to somehow ceremonialize the vows of gay partners to live together (short of calling it marriage). But McCormick could not resist feeling that those vows should be flagrantly interfered with at any time there seemed a chance that either partner might be won back to "normative" heterosexuality. He felt that his life was always the preferable choice. Deploring the state of marriage today, he failed to see that the church has major moral responsibility



for millions of destructive marriages, because of its deliberate policy of pressuring everyone to marriage, even though it is against the nature of many (not just Gays). The divorce rate might drop considerably if only really marriageable people were urged to marry. But heterosexuals always seem to fear that heterosexuality has no natural charms of its own, that people will marry only if all other options are forcibly closed.

Almost two years ago, in the *Claretian* magazine, *U.S. Catholic*, Fr. Henry Fehren wrote: "The church has forced on many Christian homosexuals an uncalled-for sense of shame . . . we must get rid of the idea that . . . the life of homosexuals centers on [genital] functions. . . . Since man is by nature a sexual being . . . even if we were to consider homosexuality a . . . defect, the homosexual should be free, without any judgment . . . on our part, to come to terms with his sexual drives. . . . A census of homosexuals would include popes and bishops, military leaders, philosophers, housewives, truck drivers. . . . The church's unbending stand has been based on misinterpretations of stray Biblical texts written for another age and culture, and on a vague, unproved 'natural law'."

Decrying the church's older monstrous moral theology manuals, with their warnings about decent, less decent and indecent parts of the body, etc., and their baleful use of terms like pervert, unnatural, personality flaw, etc., he recalls a passage in the Book of Wisdom of Solomon (11:24; Apocrypha) wherein the Lord is said to "Love all that exists; you hold in abhorrence nothing that you have made, for had you hated anything, you would not have formed it." For those who don't take the Apocrypha as divinely inspired, the same message is clear from Acts 10:9-18 and Romans 14:12-15.

"A Christian," Fehren continued, "will not sneeringly refer to homosexuals as queers, pansies, faggots, or make them the butt of ridicule. People who do this are often insecure in their own sexuality and fear homosexuality in themselves. . . . When we truly love another person we must let that person be . . . true to his own nature. If we accept the divine command to love homosexuals we will love them as they are. . . .

Homosexual love can be as noble, beautiful and holy as heterosexual love. . . ."

This spirit dominated at Bergamo, and more, the spirit of gay Catholics who, however much the church still lags behind, were proud both of their gayness and of their faith. While conservatives still show horror at any mention of homosexuality, and even liberals often focus the discussion at the level of sex acts alone, as if love and relatedness were no part of the gay scene, the church at large is still a long way from really validating gay love and personhood. For gay young priests and seminarians, and for gay Catholics women bearing an even more complex and frustrating burden, that is the front-line issue.

Gay is love. Love is good. The rest seems dated bias which the church picked up, not from the gospel, and certainly not from real natural law, but from the cultural milieu in which it grew into a powerful institution, worldly in the worst sense. To the young gay Catholic, gay pride is fundamental to the needed spiritual quickening of the church.

Sister Jeannine of Baltimore gave a lively account of the special concerns of lesbians and women generally in the church, but so few women were present and so little time allotted for their special concerns that only the surface was scratched. Dedi Robinson of the St. Louis Women's Center got to the heart of the matter in reporting how hard it had been for her to relate to a religion conceived entirely in male terms—even Mary seems little more than a ceramic personification of the mother role. That, I suspect, will remain a severe problem for the church long after the acceptance of Gays has been generally achieved.

I had always assumed that priestly celibacy was simply a hangover from the church's anti-sex days. Father Brockman and one young brother from St. John's University in Minnesota disabused me of that view. Priests and nuns take vows to become symbolically the bride of Christ. And most gay religious leaders remain deeply committed to their personal celibacy vow, even while they are insistent that the church validate the rights of sexual expression for Gays generally. But what an erotic charge that vow has: holding yourself in

lifelong reserve for that eventual emotional (and physical?) consummation with Christ! No wonder that the dreams of mystics generally are highly erotic in imagery: the vision of personal union with divinity that is much the same with Christian, Jewish, Islamic and Oriental mystics. I suspect we can learn in such mystic experiences much about the fundamental spiritual nature of gayness, while much that currently is called "the gay life" may come to seem more its misapplication.

The Bergamo Conference will be repeated next year, and other Catholic orders will possibly soon be hosting similar retreats. It is a sign of the magnitude of change occurring in Catholic circles. . . .

After the conference, one youthful participant soon stirred a hornet's nest in Detroit. A regular columnist for the diocesan newspaper, *Michigan Catholic*, Brian McNaught published a column titled "Gay or Straight, Love is the Goal." He said that "more than one song" is being played by the church and today's homosexual is consequently "torn by the beat of different spiritual tunes."

Arguing that the church will soon be ashamed of the Bishops' statement authored by Fr. Harvey (who attempts to reform homosexuals by prayer) and the actions of the New York diocese in opposing the Gay Rights law, he insisted that "if we believe that God is love and firmly believe that all men are called through Jesus to share in that love, how dare we tell the homosexual that he may not love?"

This is illustrated sensitively and with emotional strength, if not, unfortunately, with narrative clarity, in the excellent new film, *A Very Natural Thing*, where in the opening scene we watch David, the protagonist as he sadly turns his back on monastic life and his religious commitment because of the seemingly irreconcilable conflict with his sexual drives.

McNaught, who had assumed leadership of Dignity/Detroit, was promptly dismissed from the paper, and has announced a fast "to atone for the sins directed against his gay brothers and sisters [by] the church of which we are a part." Dignity has called on individual gay Catholics to support McNaught by prayer vigils and meditation. ●





community leader

PHOTOS BY HY CHASE

# KENNETH SPRAGUE

## AKA DAKOTA

by John Marvin

For Ken it was the key to a wealth of business opportunities. With the cooperation of wealthy friends and acquaintances, he acquired not only Gold's Gym, but two Venice apartment complexes and a massive Hollywood sound stage, and as profits were realized from them, he has bought out the other stockholders and taken over full ownership.

His studio was originally started with the idea of becoming a major, legitimate influence in the field of pornography. "When you buy a film through the mail," he explains, "all you have is a post office box, and no idea whether the place is legitimate or not. How many people have a fear of sending their \$50 or \$25 or whatever to some anonymous post office box? I know I would. But if it's 800 North Seward—if it's a big, permanent facility that you can come by and look at—then business should boom. And also, we had the facilities there to do really good pornographic films—ones that were really top-quality technically. But the legal climate just wasn't right for that sort of thing, and I began to find out that all the sleepless nights just weren't worth it. And also, I found out that we could make just as much, if not more, in the legitimate field. And so I opened the studio as an independent



rental sound stage. Now over a quarter of all the television commercials made in Hollywood are shot on my stage, as well as a lot of your independent television productions. The volume of work done at the studio is really heavy." Ironically, among the studio's major clients are the street-corner evangelists Tony and Susan Alamo, who tape their weekly religious telecasts on the same sound stage that a couple of years ago produced the Gay hard-core epic, "Loadstar."

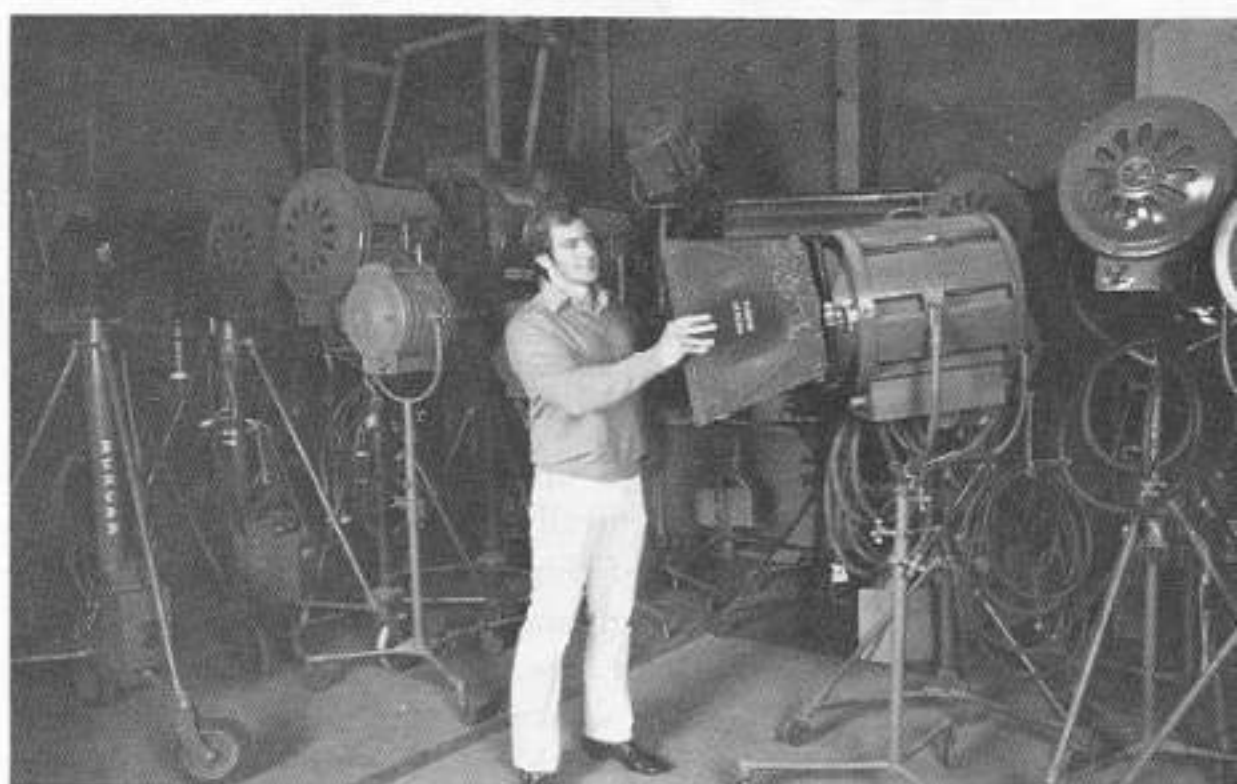
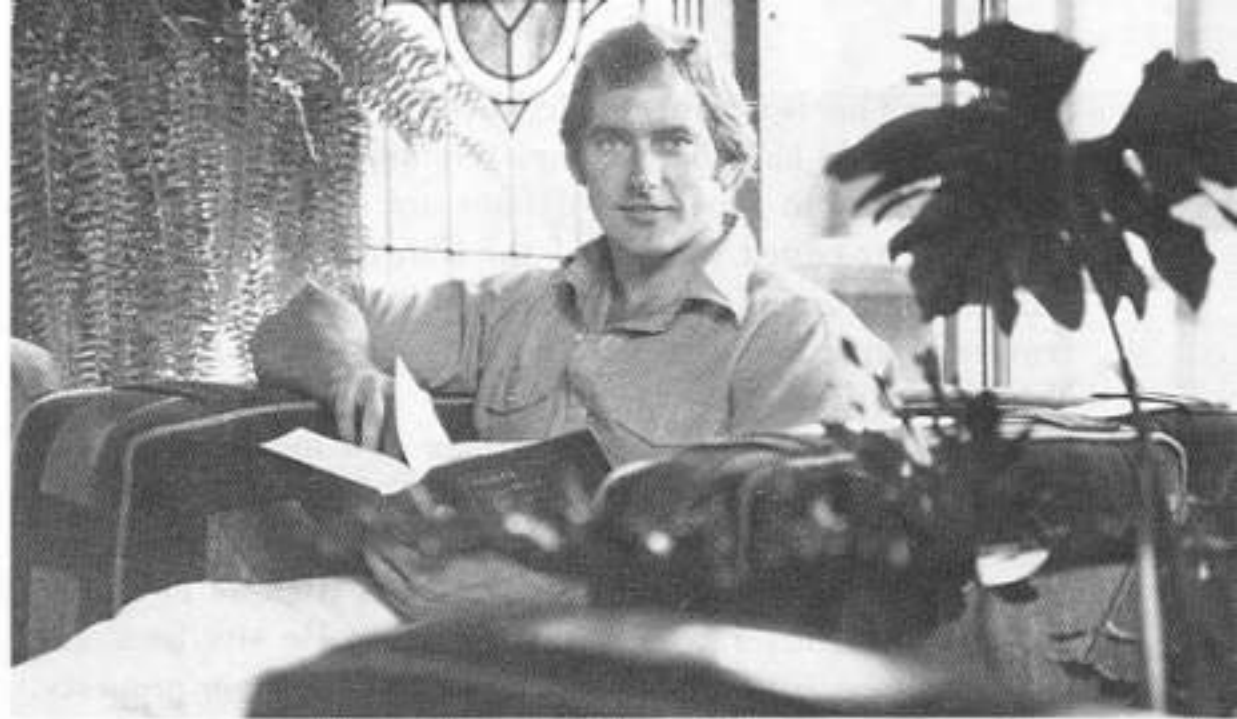
Even in its legitimacy, however, the studio still comes under the close scrutiny of the Hollywood Vice Squad's notorious hunter of Gay vice, Lieutenant Martin. "Every once in a while, he pulls a surprise visit, just hoping to find something going on," Ken says with an amused grin. "I don't think he can even conceive of someone in the Gay community having a business that isn't a front for something decadent. Sometimes I feel like calling him up sometime when Tony and Susan Alamo are there, and disguising my voice, and saying, 'Hey, you've got to get over to Dakota Productions right away! There's a big orgy going on over there!'"

Among the more recent productions of the studio was a Gay-oriented feature called "So Long, Blue Boy," a film which was received coldly by the Gay community in general for what spokesmen considered demeaning homosexual stereotypes. The film had a weak, unfocused script and Gay characters who were questionable, at best, and was a major disappointment to Ken, who had originally conceived it as the biggest-budgeted, most ambitious Gay hard-core film ever. "We changed that original concept along the way because of the problems of interstate transportation of a supposedly 'pornographic' picture," he explains. "Rather than take the chance of being subjected to indictments around the country, we decided to turn it into a 'legitimate' R-rated feature."

"Still, the film had a lot of pretty obvious problems," I mention. "Weren't you aware of at least some of them while shooting was in progress?"

"Oh, I was aware of them," he says ruefully, "but I had given the director full artistic control over the film. That was a reflection of my inexperience in producing a major picture. The director is an excellent director, but the responsibilities of his first motion picture, and all the psychological problems involved with it, were just too great for anybody to handle. I don't think he had any objectivity about it. I can assure you, that will not happen again."

Still, however, Ken blames the Gay community's negative reaction largely on that favorite old bugaboo of producers everywhere — the critics. Or in this case, a critic. "From the general media, we got relatively favorable reviews," he points out. "They thought it was highly controversial, and they didn't know if a general audience would accept it, but they thought that technically and dramatically it was good. But then Harold Fairbanks of the Advocate came out with a two-page spread, just tearing it to pieces. Now, frankly, I don't think Fairbanks is a good reviewer. He overreacts. I thought the review was unjustified, in all honesty. And then, on the day the film opened, there were pickets out in front of the theater. Now, mind you, not a one of these people had actually seen the film. They didn't even have enough respect for themselves to make their own judgement. They had the word of this one prejudiced reviewer that it was an anti-Gay film, and on that alone, they ran right out and picketed the theater. So, in that sense, I thought it was totally unjust. If the review





had said, "This is a great movie." I think the turnout and the reaction would have been completely different. I really do."

At the present time, negotiations are under way to sell a somewhat re-edited version of the film to a distributor, and chances look good for Ken to at least break even on his controversial investment. Where does he plan to go next, I ask. What is in the near future for him?

For one thing, he has a plan for a new movie — an ambitious, highly controversial adaptation of the Bible's Revelation of Saint John. On the other hand, however, he is harboring a secret desire to escape from Los Angeles to a hideaway in Vancouver which he is buying. He sits back and reflects a moment at the mention of the Vancouver property. "I like the tall trees . . . and the water . . . and the solitude . . ." he sighs. "I'm not really such an extrovert as you might imagine. Not at heart. I've always felt more comfortable being alone. When I was five years old, four years old, I used to just play off by myself. Dig my own mudholes. And not be near people. My family was never close. There were no emotional bonds. And I was always the black sheep, anyway, with ideas and desires that I didn't dare to take home to discuss with the family, liberal as they were. So now I feel claustrophobic around a lot of people. Around nothing but cold concrete. I really do want to live out on a farm somewhere. Live in seclusion." He smiles ironically. "But on the other hand, I like to be in the middle of things, too. L.A. is really a great city, because of all the excitement. Something is always happening, any time you want it to. Some people can have both. A little place to go on the weekends, and then work all week. But I can't seem to do that. Either I have to work seven days a week, full time, month after month, or I have to go off and call it quits. And once I'm there, I might be the sorriest person ever. The worst problem is that if I give it all up and go away, I might not have it to come back to, if I want."

It is getting late in the afternoon, and Gold's is beginning to fill up with one of the biggest galleries of muscle-bound types seemingly ever assembled in one place. There is a jocular camaraderie among them that does not, however, stand in the way of their work. They are here with but one purpose — to build the biggest, most perfectly-toned bodies possible. Unlike Ken, this is the be-all and end-all of their lives. It is time for me to go, but there is one other question that needs to be asked — "Do you ever regret your past? Would you rather forget that Dakota ever existed?"

"Sometimes," he admits reluctantly, "in the middle of the night, I do. I lie there and think, 'Oh, God, what is this going to do to my future?' Back in Ohio I always thought that I would like to go into politics, and I think that that is pretty well out of reach now. You can talk around a lot of things, but I don't know how you could parlay my past into a political career. But whenever I start thinking about the future, I realize that if it weren't for all that, I wouldn't have a future to think about. I'd still be back in Ohio running a machine in some machine shop for a living. So, I can't really say I'm sorry I did it all, because I wouldn't be here today without it. I'm really one hell of a lucky guy, and I can credit it all to my being willing to take off my swimming suit when that photographer told me to."

So this is Kenneth Sprague today — one of the community's wealthiest businessmen, just five years away from a grueling job in an Ohio factory. Where the next five years will

find him, no one, not even Ken, will hazard a guess. But we can be sure of one thing — he won't be standing still!

Kenneth Sprague stands with ill-concealed proprietary pride in the middle of Gold's Gym in Venice, surveying the maze of weights and body-building equipment. Gold's isn't your plush, carpeted Beverly Hills health spa. It's a rugged, no-nonsense, bodybuilder's gym with an international reputation for being The Place To Train for all serious Mr. America and Mr. Universe contenders. And Ken Sprague owns Gold's, lock, stock, and bench press. An impressive enough accomplishment by itself for a man who, just five years ago, was working seven nights a week at a Cincinnati tool and die firm. But that is hardly the beginning of his story.

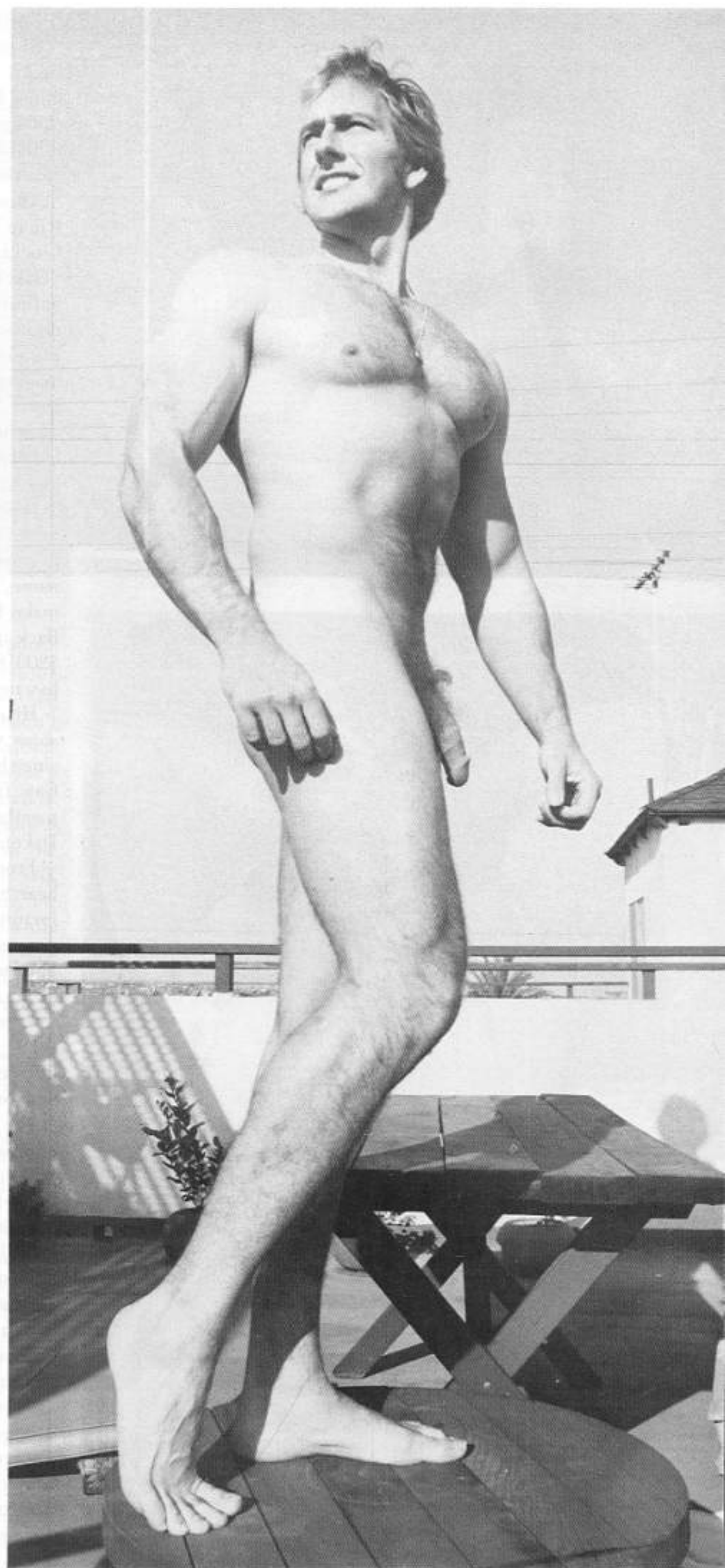
Ken Sprague is a Horatio Alger story re-told by John Rechy. He arrived in Los Angeles in 1970 with \$10 in his pocket, became "Dakota," one of the Gay community's top physique models and "porno" movie stars, utilized his contacts, invested his earnings, and now, less than five years later, he is quite literally a millionaire. He owns Hollywood's largest independent movie studio, a couple of beach-front apartment buildings, Gold's Gym, and other holdings too insignificant to mention.

Ken surveys his success with modesty, although frequently breaking into a wide, self-confident grin that belies the humility of his words. Although built like the proverbial brick outbuilding, Ken swears that he does little to maintain his physique — little by professional bodybuilding standards, at any rate. "I've always been lucky about my build," he tells me. "I didn't really work at building it up. I just did the things I enjoyed doing — playing football, running track, boxing, and the like — and then I ate what I pleased and it all just seemed to go to muscle. I've entered some physique contests, and won a few titles, but I just never had the motivation to follow that up like you have to. I always had too many other irons in the fire. Now I just go down to the beach and run six miles every morning, and work out at the Gym when I get a chance, and I'm lucky enough to be able to keep in shape."

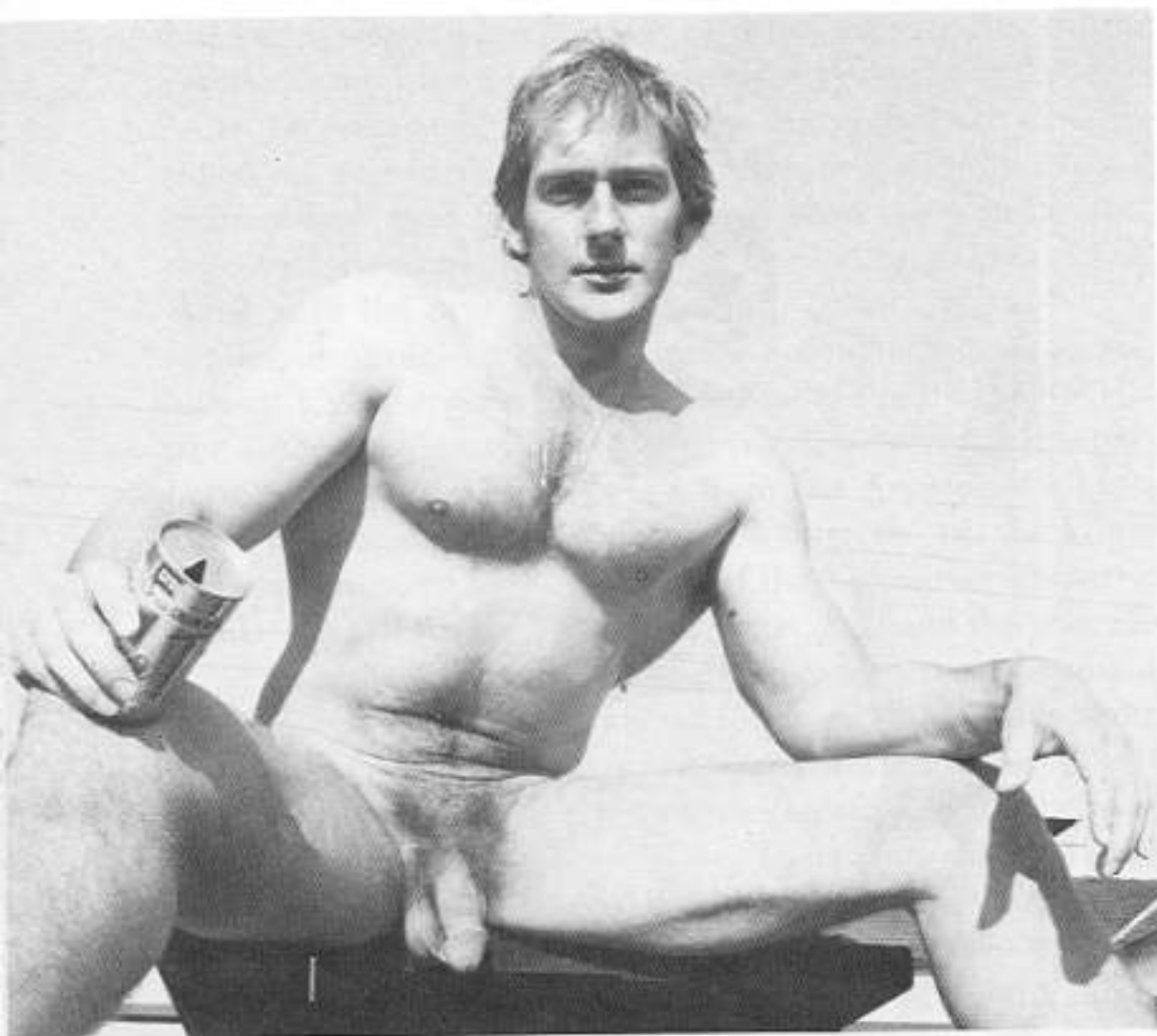
Ken's professional life as Dakota began in 1969, while he was a chemistry student at the University of Cincinnati and working in a machine tool company at night. "I went to school during the day, full time, and I worked full time at night," he remembers. "I'd often work 12 hours a night, seven nights a week, when they were busy. And then when they weren't so busy, I'd drop back to just nine hours. I had this friend who bought a lot of the Colt Studio pictures, and one day he said to me, 'Hey, I think you should try to be a Colt model.' And so he took the initiative and sent a photo of me to the Colt Studio in New York, and they invited me to come to New York and pose for them. Well, I'd never been outside of Ohio and Kentucky in my life, and I always wanted to go to New York, so that sounded just fine to me."

Although he acknowledges that it sounds far-fetched in retrospect, Ken insists that he had no really clear concept of just what modelling for Colt would entail. "I'd never done any sort of modelling before, except in some physique contests," he tells me. "But other than that, nothing. So I thought, well, they want swimming suit type photos, and the like. So I went in for the first shooting session with my swimming suit, and they took a few shots — just about what I expected — and then all of a sudden, the photographer said, 'Okay, now take off the suit.'"









"And you weren't expecting that?" I ask incredulously.

"I told you you wouldn't believe it, but it's true," he swears, crossing his heart. "It was the furthest thing from my mind. But the first time he said, 'Take off the suit,' I didn't think twice about it. I just naturally don't seem to have any inhibitions about anything. So I took off the suit, and I guess you could say it's been off ever since."

Those first pictures were done during a four-day vacation trip to New York. Then Ken returned to school and the job in Cincinnati, and Colt Studios sent their new model, christened "Dakota," out to their customers. The response was enthusiastic, and further pictures seemed in order. Ken, meanwhile, was taken a fresh look at his life in Cincinnati. Being photographed in the nude seemed a much easier way of making a living than working twelve hours a day in a tool company. And so when Colt asked him to travel to California to do some more modelling, he was ready and willing. He arrived in California in March of 1970 for his second modelling session, and he has been here ever since.

He had just completed his second session of straightforward nudes for Colt when he was approached by a private collector to appear in a hard-core sex film. "I had about \$10 to my name," he explains, "when this fellow said, 'Hey, you can make \$200, if you'll just be in this film.' So I said, 'Great!' Back in Ohio, I'd work my butt off for a week and a half for \$200! So, I made the film. It was for a private collector, and it has never been released."

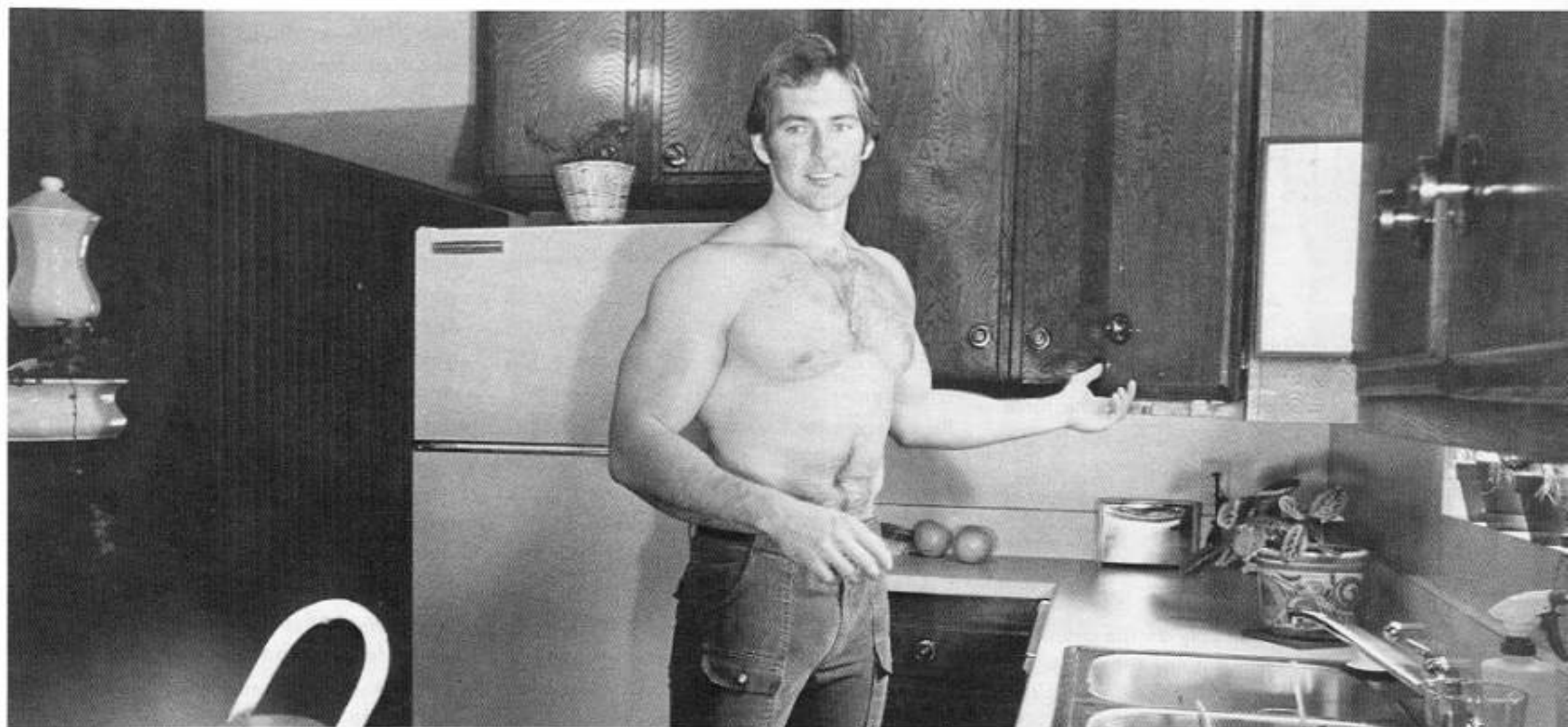
His co-star in that first hard-core film was another handsome young bodybuilder named Jim Cassidy. The two have since become the Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald of the Gay films, appearing in several highly successful movies together. In fact, Cassidy has co-starred in all but one of Dakota's half-dozen hard-core movies.

From that start, the career of Dakota was on its way. To hear him describe it, it was more a series of lucky breaks and fortuitous friendships than anything else, but every year dozens of youngsters with pretty faces and nice bodies are handed the same kind of opportunities that Ken Sprague had at the start, and most of them move on in a few months or a few years, well-used, but with nothing more to show for it than when they started. What made Ken Sprague so different? Why did he succeed where so many just survive and some don't even do that?

For a start, he came from a highly artistic, athletic, and educated family. Both his brothers are Ph.d's and honored athletes. One is a respected professional dancer. His mother was a ballerina and his father is an influential politician. Ken was an "A" student in both high school and college as well as an All-American track and field performer. He was a popular student, and was class president in both high school and college. With this background, Ken is equally comfortable today in the rough, he-man atmosphere of his Gym or in a plush Bel Aire mansion, and it was this versatility that allowed him to mingle on secure footing with a wide variety of people.

Also, Ken has the rare ability to enjoy the company of others while still maintaining an objective view of their motives. "I actually trust very few people," he says, "but I like nearly everyone I meet. You don't need to dislike someone just because you can't trust him. The two are not synonymous. There are some people whom I love very, very dearly, but I wouldn't trust them any farther than I could



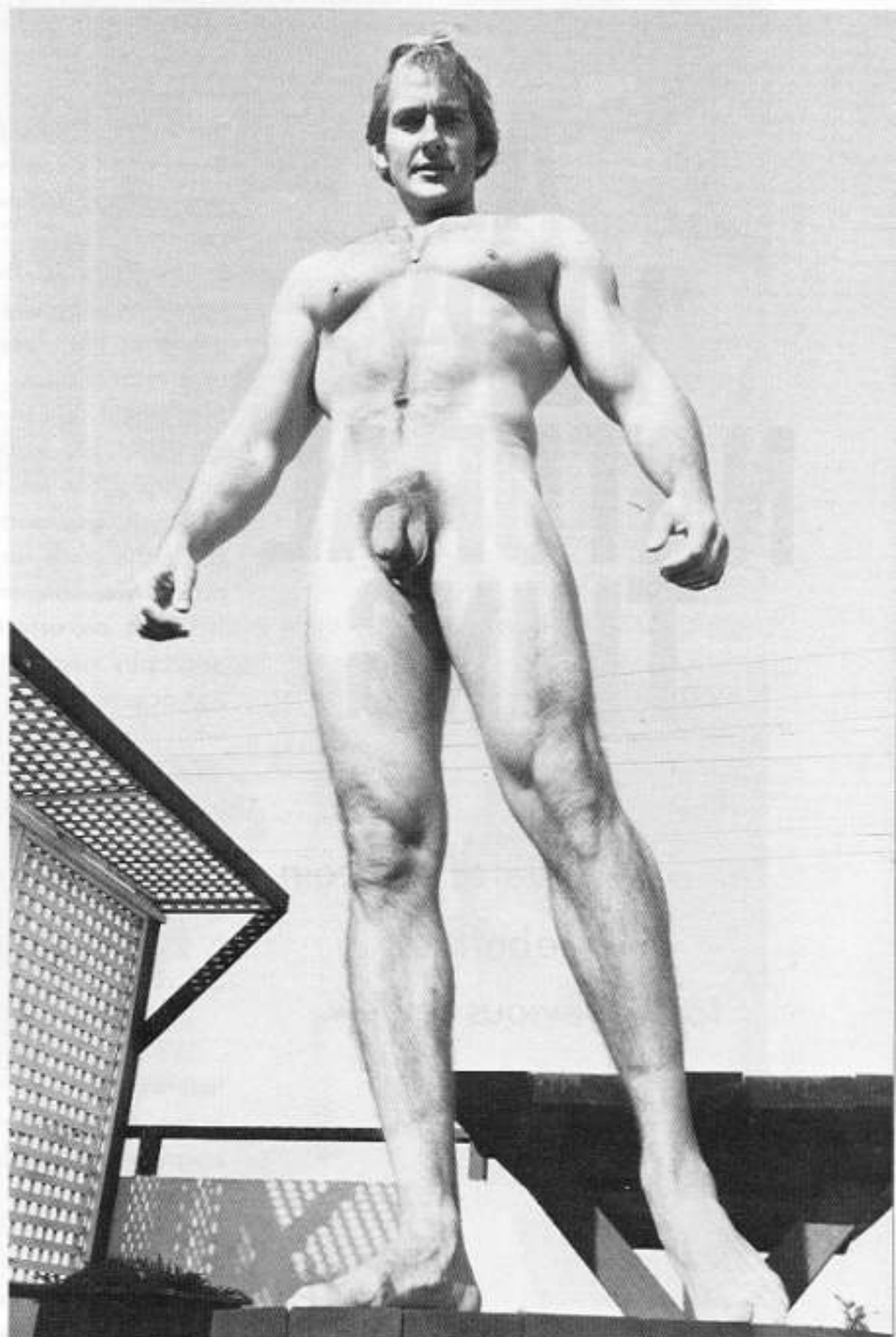


throw them."

I ask to what Ken attributes his success, and he responds with his customary, if suspect, modesty. "Definitely my friends have played a bigger part in my business success than anything. I wouldn't have had the opportunity if it hadn't been for friends and acquaintances I made out here in California. The Colt Studio pictures and things of that type played a great part in getting me oriented, or getting me acquainted in business. I met a wide range of people, and I could begin to piece things together and package business deals. So in the end, we would all come out ahead. That's all there is to it. Oh, hundreds of so-called 'models' come and go, but there are few that ever make use of all the contacts that they make while they're at it. The modelling gets you the contacts, and how you use them depends on the individual. But I think that's the key — to look at it not necessarily as an end, but as a means to a greater end."

"What about the morality of all this?" I ask. "Do you find anything immoral in the concept of using other people to further your own goals?"

"Not as long as everything is all out front," he responds openly. "It's an unfortunate choice of words for me to say that I 'used' my contacts. That's a loaded word. But it's just as if you were opening a grocery store or a service station. You'd naturally go to the people you know and say, 'Would you like to invest in this project?' It's the same thing as I did. Through the modelling, I've met a lot of people with money. It's the packaging that I supply, and the initiative and the time. So it's not a 'use' type situation. It's a legitimate business arrangement. The modelling, the movies, and the stuff like that make the contacts, but it depends on how you — and you can put these words in quotes — it depends on how you 'use' these contacts. If you continually use them for just one reason — for the initial reason alone — it's not a growth type situation. That's the difference. It's a way of getting something quick. It has to be a reciprocal arrangement in all ways. That's a hard thing to learn. It was hard for me to learn. But it's the key to everything." ●





# IN TOUCH with films

In our August issue Neal Weaver reviewed the New York showing of Christopher Larkin's film "A Very Natural Thing." Although he applauded Mr. Larkin's attempt to achieve an honest representation of a gay affair, he found the results less than satisfying. Since the West Coast premiere of the same film has garnered so much attention, we thought we would report not only on the premiere itself but in keeping with IN TOUCH's policy of open ended discussion, we offer a rebuttal to Mr. Weaver's review.

—ED.

## A VERY NATURAL THING

*The other side of the coin,  
a rebuttal  
to a previous review.*

The West Coast premiere of Christopher Larkin's film, "A Very Natural Thing," was a gala benefit sponsored by the Host Committee for the Whitman-Radcliffe Foundation, an organization dedicated to removing the stigma of sexual prejudice that confronts the gay community. The premiere was attended by the writer-director of the film, Mr. Larkin, and one of its stars Curt Gareth, along with some prominent Los Angeles figures like city attorney Burt Pines and his wife. Mr. Pines has often spoken out against gay oppression and his presence in the audience was warmly applauded. Jack Albertson, the veteran actor of stage, films and television, warmed up the proceedings and introduced David B. Goodstein, the president of Whitman-Radcliffe. Mr. Goodstein informed us about the Foundation's goals in serving gay brothers and sisters in significant areas of employment, alcoholism, and rehabilitation for homosexual individuals released from penal institutions. He also stressed the desperate need for funds in the form of contributions to insure the Foundation's continuing success. The film was shown following Mr. Goodstein's remarks.

Few films in this reviewer's memory have meaningfully dealt with the real problems that face gay men involved in love relationships. The gay culture often seems bent on constant exploitation of its own kind. No matter how intriguing pornography can be, the consistent barrage of empty gay porno films as the artistic cinematic voice for gay themes is finally an irrelevant and misleading contribution. It serves no artistic purpose. Gay pornography neither instructs or broadens, nor does it lead to any understanding of what the average gay person seeks as a member of society. On the other hand, as Mr. Larkin so aptly points out, the heterosexual commercially-oriented industry films have provided the public with a view of gay people that is at best a "... debasing caricature" of what we are really like.

We are only different from the heterosexual society that has sought to pronounce us as lewd and immoral merely because our sexual preferences are for those of our own sex. But our common humanity is the same whether we are sexually satisfied by members of the opposite sex or not. E. M. Forster, whose homosexual novel Maurice was written in 1914 but

published posthumously several years ago, commented in 1960 that "What the public really loathes in homosexuality is not the thing itself but having to think about it."

Well, Mr. Larkin and Joseph Coencas who co-authored the film have done their best to make us all think about it. They have done it intelligently and with insight. They have given us a film about homosexuals that is free of mincing stereotypes and tragic figures stripped of their human dignity because they are gay. Instead they present us with three real human beings — David, Mark and Jason — each seeking to discover the meanings, the yearnings within themselves as they try to workout the feelings which bring them together, and in the case of David and Mark, feelings that finally set them apart.

Since the film is primarily about the birth, life and death of a relationship where two men become lovers and eventually drift apart, it develops slowly and carefully. We meet David as he leaves a monastery and takes up a new lifestyle as a teacher and as a homosexual. He meets Mark in a gay bar and goes to bed with him, and from there they begin to get to know each other, spending most of their time together. There is one painfully amusing scene where David wrestles Mark into a half-nelson to get Mark to admit that he loves him. Mark, although three years David's junior, is far more cynical about love than David.

We see them at their happiest as lovers — at the peak of their feelings for each other. And the sexuality in this part of the film seems only significant in showing us all avenues of the relationship. We see them at their jobs: David instructing his young pupils in the depths and meanings of the poetry we can tell he loves; Mark in his office dictating his reports, commanding his secretary, wielding his briefcase. We become quite comfortable watching them together and disappointed when the growing restlessness in Mark eventually leads to their breakup as lovers.

But the characters have been so well drawn that even though we feel disappointed at Mark's inability to come to grips with his restlessness we do not lose sympathy for him. His need to be desired, to go out and test his charisma on strangers is universal. It is something we all feel — gay or straight — some of us just manage to handle it better than others. David cannot handle it at all, and



for him the relationship must end if he is to keep his values intact.

It is perhaps a year later that David meets Jason on the fringes of a gay liberation rally. Jason is a divorced photographer with a young son. He is very active in gay lib, and he is able to raise David's consciousness significantly enough to make David examine his relationship to the gay movement. David and Jason become lovers, but when Jason asks David to live with him David refuses. His reasons? They enjoy seeing each other when they want to. Living together would make them have to spend time with each other whether they chose to or not. David's reasoning seems sound and is. His relationship with Mark has left scars that haven't healed, but he has gained wisdom and grown through the experience. We believe that his relationship with Jason will be a better one for both. The film ends with David and Jason nude running in slow motion toward the ocean with a kind of lyrical freedom. It is a moving final sequence where both spirits seem to be in harmony with each other and the world around them.

The actors in the film are all unerringly right for their roles. As David, Robert Joel mixes just the right amount of sensitivity and eagerness to bring the character to life. It is a thoughtful, moving performance. Curt Gareth's Mark is swaggeringly good-looking, his skepticism seems always there lying just behind his eyes. He is especially good in his final scene with David as they sit in an enclosed ferris wheel each unsure as to how to behave now that they are no longer together. As Jason, Bo White is a standout. He brings the small role of David's second lover into sharp focus, making it vitally and vividly alive. In a supporting role as David's friend Alan, Jay Pierce manages to make a strong impression.

The film was produced by Montage Creations and released by New Line Cinema in Technicolor and with an "R" rating. It has been flawlessly directed by Mr. Larkin who seems to have achieved the goals he had in mind when he decided to make it. He has gone where others have feared to tread. If he has not probed the depths of the gay experience, he is certainly responsible for describing an element of reality that exists in every human experience: love. "A Very Natural Thing" is a milestone for gay people and for all people who believe in love.

—BURTON STEVENS



David and Jason (Robert Joel and Bo White) watch and discuss a gay liberation parade in a scene from *A Very Natural Thing*, written and directed by Christofer Larkin.



Jason (Bo White) talks with ex-wife and child (Deborah and Jessie Trowbridge).



David (Robert Joel) and Jason (Bo White) struggle for an open, workable relationship.





discovery

PHOTOS BY C. C. HILL

# THE BUILD THAT STOPS CARS

**BY ALLAN LEOPOLD**



TONY SAPPINGTON arrived three-quarters of an hour late for our interview, toting a large tan canvas bag, his brown eyes popping with annoyance.

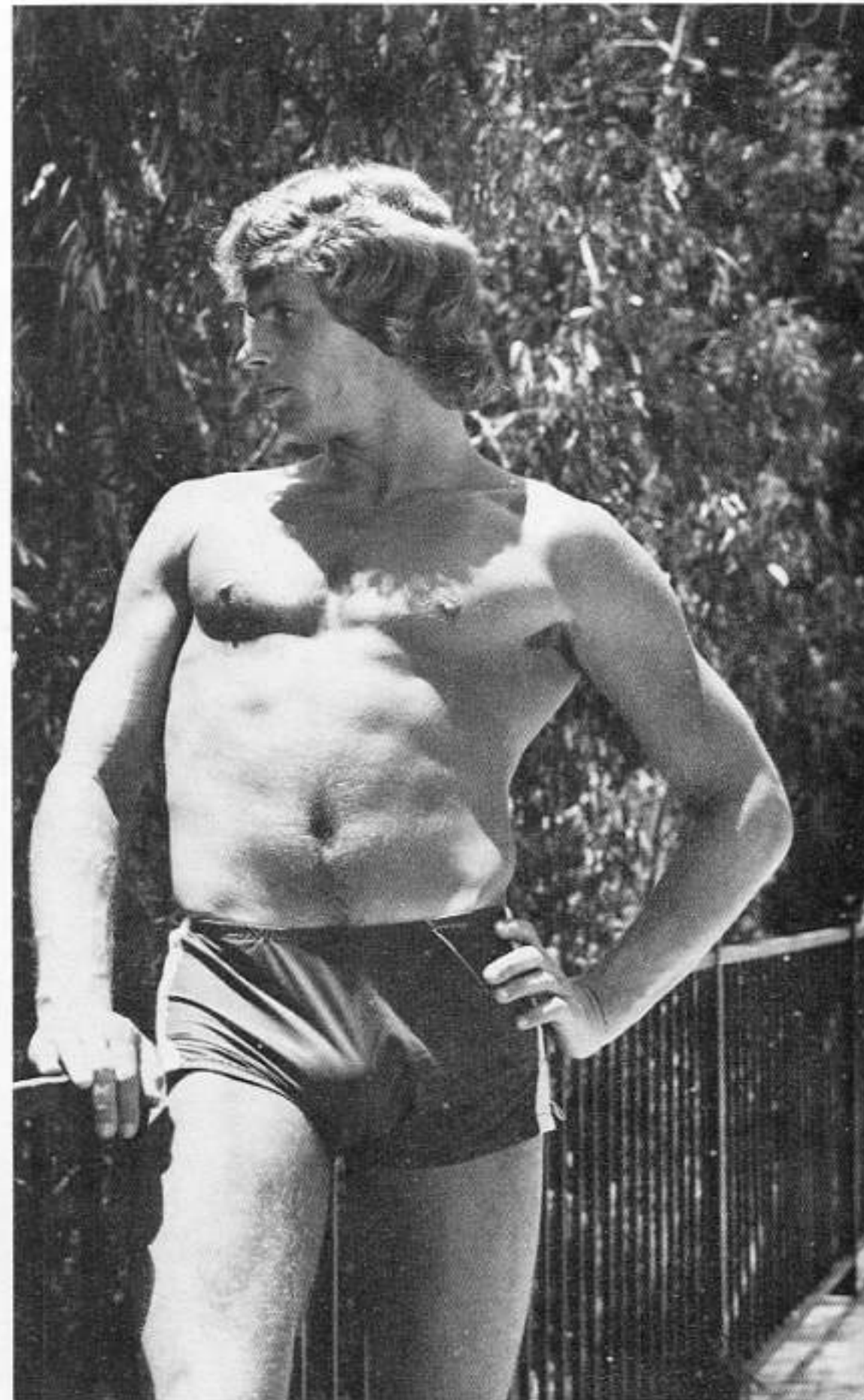
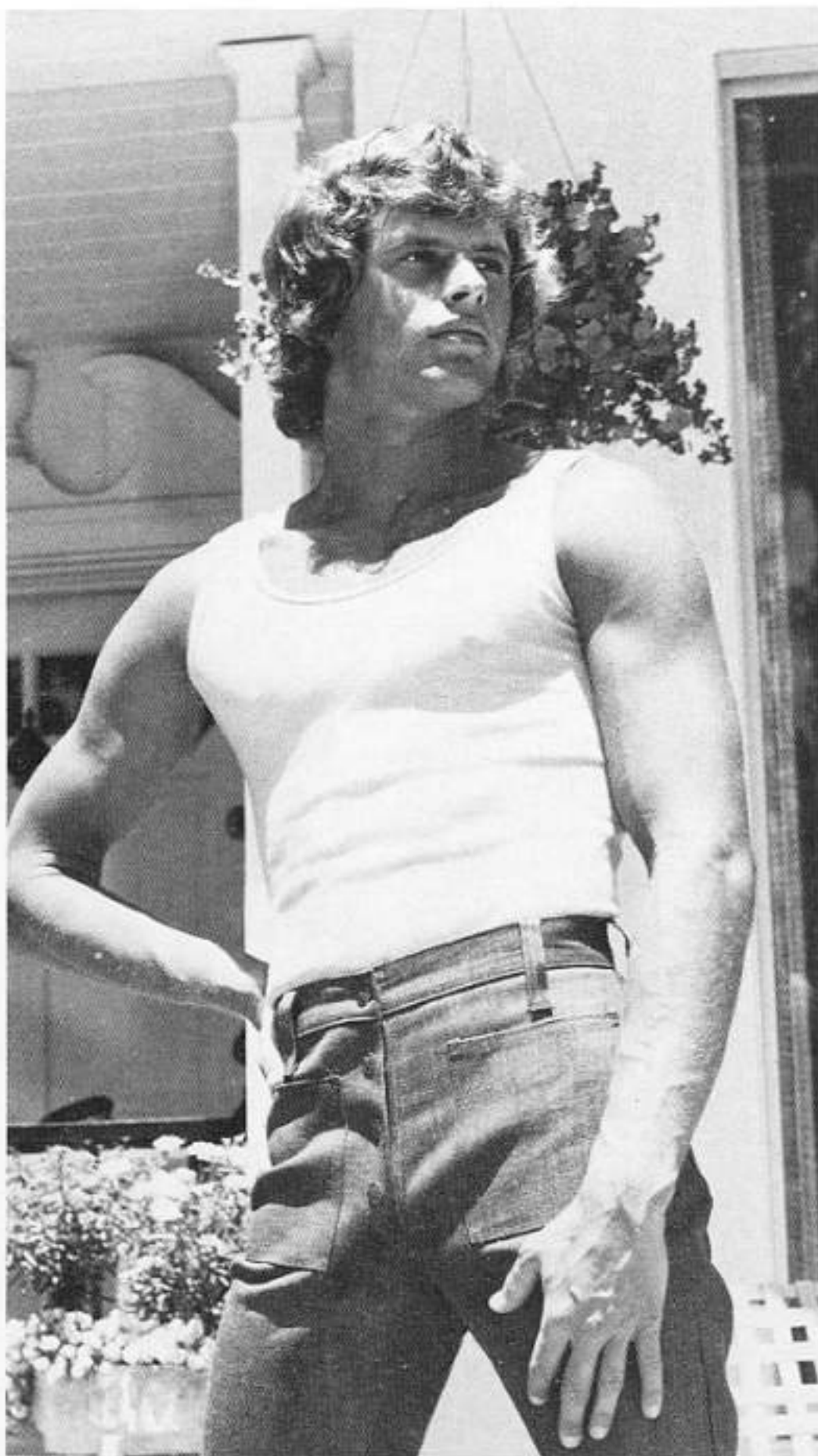
"I paid twelve bucks for the airport cab to get here. I just got in from Palm Springs and I couldn't find a bus. Twelve lousy bucks!"

"Well, you're here now. Sit down and relax and have some dinner." I handed him the menu. Twenty-three years old, he was turning most of the heads in the restaurant and he knew it. His blue denim jacket was open to the belt buckle, displaying rock-hard, deeply tanned pectorals over a lovely set of washboard abdominals. His blond, windblown hair completed a picture of healthy, outdoor animal vitality and daily exposure to the sun wherever it's to be found. Tony ordered Rack of Ribs and settled back to see who was staring at him. He also filled me in on his early life.





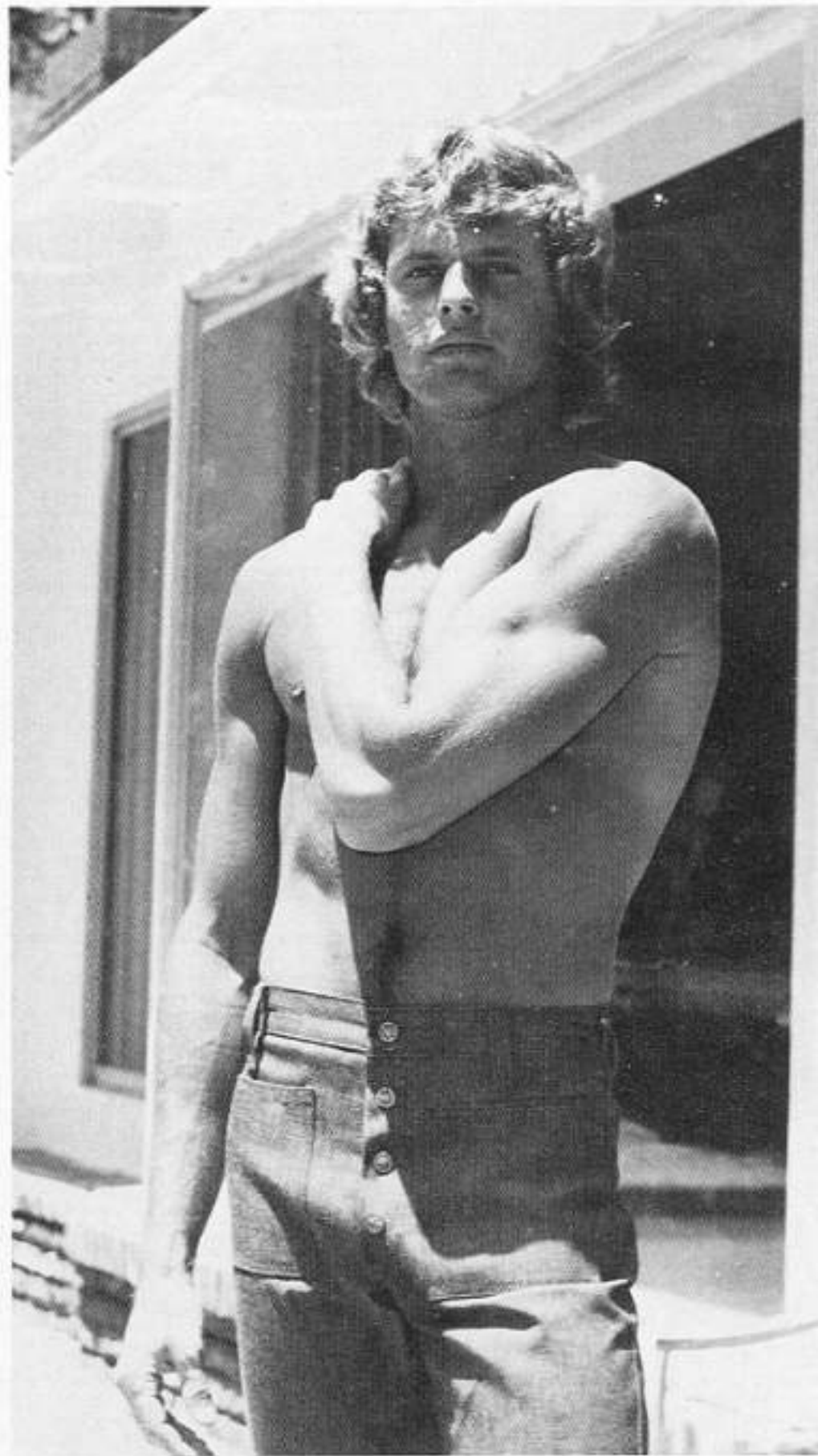




"I was born March 10, 1951 in South Bend, Indiana. My father died 6 years ago of blood poisoning following a tooth extraction and my mom remarried a retired furnace man. I went to St. Stanislaus Grammar and Junior High School. The nuns and fathers were very strict there and I got my ass paddled with a wooden paddle whenever I broke the rules, which was pretty nearly every day. When I was fifteen at Mishawaka High, I started to lift weights. I also started my daily calisthenics and stretching exercises. They're isometric. Movements with tension and resistance. Force upon Force. I put one hand against the heel of another and push as hard as I can. This keeps me in shape. I do 100 sit-ups a day for my abdominals and 100 push-ups for my pectorals. At the age of 17, I had enough of school so I joined the army. I went to Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri for my Basic Training which was real rough. Then on to Fort Knox, Kentucky, to learn to be a radio operator. I was discharged in 1970 and returned to South Bend with no idea of what I wanted to do next. I tried to be a Welder and enrolled at Ivy Tech for six months but that wasn't what I wanted. So I started bummin' around. I landed in Charleston, South Carolina, and tried Circus life. For the life of me, I can't remember the name of that circus.

It's a good life and I dug the people. I hung around with the acrobats and really envied their ability. It looks attractive and glamorous but it's hard work and you've got to keep at it. I signed on as a Roustabout but it's very tiring work pounding stakes and hoisting canvas. It's great for building muscles. I was such a good worker they made me promise I'd stick around. I said okay but, after three days, I'd had it and split on 'em. I lit out for nearby Isle of the Palms Beach just outside of Charleston to take in the sun's rays. I'm always taking the sun whenever I get the chance. I walk around with my shirt open a lot. And, most of the time, I take it off altogether. When ya got a nice build, why try to hide it? Sometimes I take off my shoes and let my toes soak up the sun too. It's Nature's Way. I met a guy on Isle of the Palms Beach who told me I could find work modeling for G-Q Magazine in West Palm Beach. When I got there I couldn't locate it so I went on to Fort Lauderdale where I met a genius. A writer. His name was James Elliott Newton and he gave me a job stamping and mailing his books out. I loved him because of what he did for me. He encouraged me to go back to school and he enrolled me in night High where I made good grades. We made it for a year and a half and then, at the age of 52, he suddenly died of a





heart attack. I sure miss him. After that, I decided to head for Hollywood and become an actor. I plan to get a summer lifeguard job and go to UCLA in the fall. I hear they got a good school of acting there. In the meantime, I'm tryin' to have a lot of fun between my depressions."

"Your depressions?"

"Yeah. They come in spells. I'm a Pisces and Pisces are lovers. I get into spells where I just like to think and be by myself for weeks at a time. I can't explain why it happens. They just do and I hate them spells. They're depressing but I guess it's good that I have them. They give me time to settle down and think about myself and what I wanna do."

"How was it in Palm Springs?"

"Great. A lot of girls and guys came right up to me on the street and told me what a terrific body I had. Even straight guys."

"Does this occur often?"

"All the time. I turn a lot of men on. It's cool. It's because I take care of my looks. I quit working out at the Florida YMCA and Beverly Hills Health Club. I don't have to pay to look like I do. Weights are for people who ain't got it."

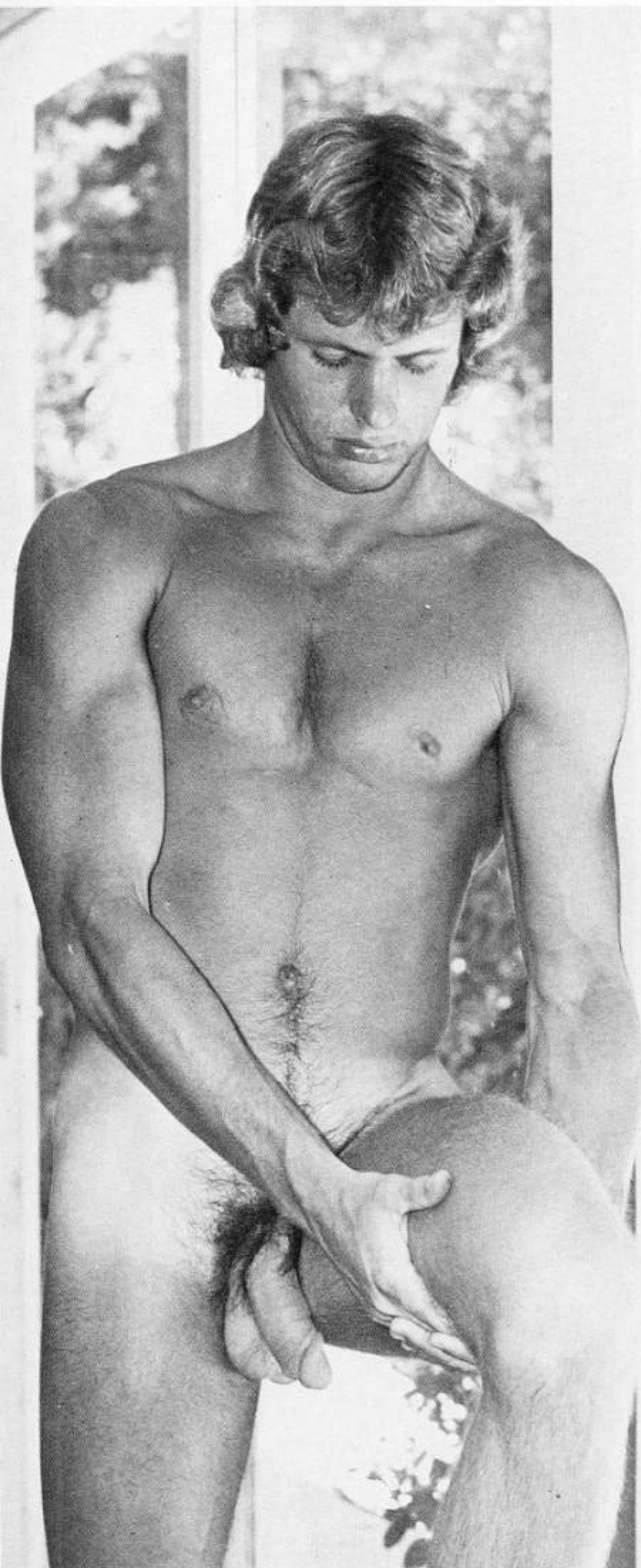
"Do any guys turn you on?"















"Yeah. Robert Conrad. He's cool. I know it'd be interesting to meet him. He's got the best looking body out of all those Hollywood guys."

"Are you interested in meeting any actresses?"

"Naw . . . Hey, WOW, that stuff is hot! I'll steal your water."

Tony had smothered his dinner in hot sauce which he mistook for barbecue sauce. He leaned back, and picked up a toothpick.

"Women aren't very unique. They're all the same. I can't think of one Hollywood actress that I'd be attracted to. They're all square. They don't turn me on. I'd take a plain girl over a movie star any day."

"Do you like movies?"

"Yeah. 'Papillon' is one of the best movies I've ever seen."

"Who styles your hair?"

"I do it myself. It's a shag cut."

"Any hobbies?"

"Yeah. I used to play the trombone. I play pretty good for what I took. I'd say I have musical talent. My grandfather played the violin. My grandma played piano for silent movies and all my uncles have played at least one instrument. I'm an excellent dancer too. Pretty good for just a social dancer. I'm a pretty strong weight-lifter too. I could go to competition but it's too much like work."

"Any other hobbies?"

"I did records. Rock stuff."

"What rock groups do you like?"

"Chicago and Rare Earth."

"Are you into any sports?"

"Golf and swimming. I swim the crawl."

"You mentioned before that you travel a lot."

"All the time. These Straights in Palm Springs I just came from want me to go to the Colorado River with 'em for the Boat Races. I dig Vegas, too. Last time I went there I made a couple of hundred bucks in one night. Not bad when ya start out with five. I saw Lido de Paris at the Stardust. I think it's the best show there."

"You like a busy social life?"

"Within limits. Too much partyin' ain't too cool. I feel like an asshole one party after another. It's a waste of time."

"Any favorite food?"

"I did everything Italian. Spaghetti with meat sauce. I like the Villa Capri Restaurant. For \$7.95 they serve the coolest veal. I want to go to Rome, Italy for the Romance. I like Italian ways and customs. Italians are the coolest. I would like to drive an Italian Ferrari. It's the fastest car on the road and it's pretty expensive. It's got European Class. I also want to get to France. To the Riviera. I've heard all about it."

"What do you look for in a person?"

"I look for Class when I first meet someone. His personal make-up. How he takes care of himself. If he's sincere. If he has respect for me."

"Any other remarks?"

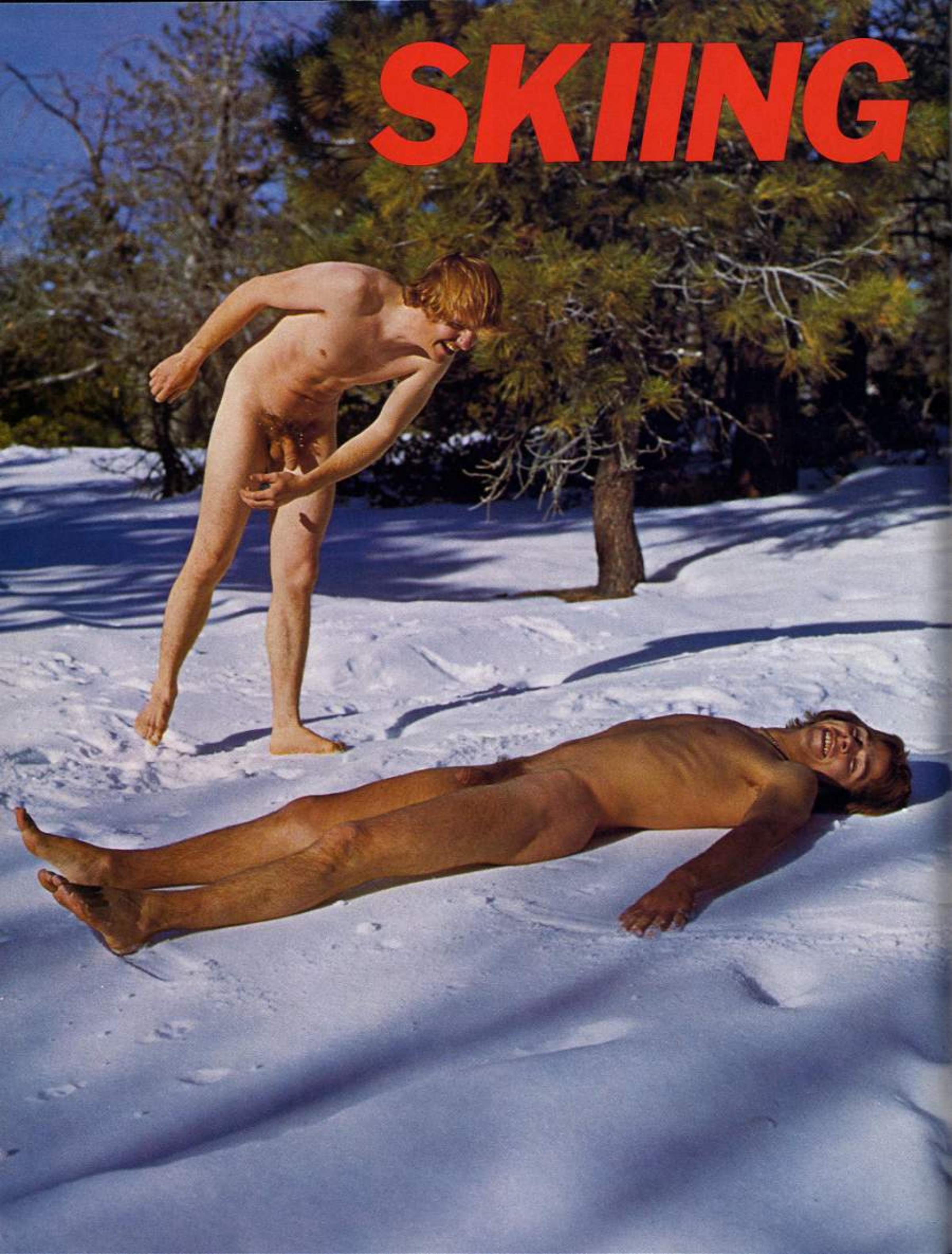
"Yeah. I think bein' a Centerfold is neat. It's cool. I think it will do a lot for me. I'm goin' to be a knockout. I want to see those pictures. If the pictures come out as I hope they will, we're gonna clean house!"

"Anything else?"

"Yeah. I wish Pot were legal and I hope to be rich and famous some day." ●



# SKIING





# ...LIVING FOR TWO MINUTES ON A MOUNTAIN OF GLASS

**C**alifornia is the most amazing place. You can be lying out in the sun at the beach, tanning away, then . . . whammo . . . you get this really terrific idea. Hey, why not go skiing this weekend? So, instead of having to wait for the summer months to pass like most of the country is forced to do, with a quick hop in the car and a couple of hours of driving, you can peel away all those months. Here, in the heartland of some of the very best ski areas in the country, all the cold, powdery, white delight is only a quick jaunt away from the warm, grainy delight of the sandy beach.

Some of the finest ski slopes in the country — lots and lots of soft, white powder covering high, whiz happy slopes — are only a few hours away by car or only minutes by air. Then, too, there's that delightful bus service, Amtrack serving all the popular ski resorts. It has many little extras that can add so much to a week or just a weekend of white fun. The airlines have to be counted on to get you to the snow and sun fun of Sun Valley, Idaho, the primal splendors of Jackson Hole, Wyoming or that best of all possible ski worlds, the sky tripping, jet setting swiftness of Aspen, Rocky Mountain high, Colorado. For most people, though, half the fun seems to be getting there on your own. If you are into a "please, I'd rather do it myself" number, you'll find a nice little journey by car can take you to many good, close ski areas with no problem at all.

Our next door neighbor, Nevada, has some of the best slopes in the country. Many of these can be found around Lake Tahoe. A quick drive back to the California side of the lake will send you through several more like Olympic Village and Squaw Valley. A few more miles south, down Highway 40 and you're in the neat little Sugar Bowl in Norden. It's bright and active during its snow season which runs from late September until early April. Another quick hop along U.S. 395 and there's the great and famous yearlong ski resort, Mammoth. This is certainly the best

California has to offer and, for my money, in many ways far outdistances even Aspen. Granted, there's none of the tinsel or carnival-like atmosphere of that frost iced, Montana pastry. Still, for simple, straight-out slalom . . . Alpine style, downhill racing . . . you just can't beat those slopes. The snowy peaks jutt up out of a valley dotted with crisp, clean diamond-blue lakes that are lace edged with pungent pine pushing their way on up into the blue California sky in glittering white majesty. If it's really skiing you're into, then it's really Mammoth you want.

If, on the other hand, you are one of those adventuresome souls — understand I do mean truly adventuresome — and have a decided taste for danger you may want to try the totally uncivilized plunges at Mineral King. If so, hurry! It may soon be Disneyed into a plastic sub-preservation. It's wild and it's rugged. You'll find this awe inspiring, natural wonder near Porterville, set in the frosted winter wilderness of Sequoia National Park. The roads are totally snowed in from early Fall until late Spring, cutting it off from even basic civilization. This means long hikes and very cold bodies if you want to venture into its impressive hills. For those of you with wild, grit-teeth courage it's more than worth it. For slaloming, it's out of the question . . . too many hidden dangers like rocks and sudden drops. It is well suited to the new snow-rage, cross-country skiing. This rapidly-advancing-in-popularity sport has long been a way of life in all the northern countries of Europe. There, it's a means of transportation, especially during the heavy winter snows. Here it is purely another snow sport, and making successful gains with the ski enthusiast. It requires a smaller ski than the one used for Alpine style. Actually, it's little more than pushing one ski at a time in front of the other, guiding yourself with the poles and advancing forward. It is a good way to see the countryside. If you're a hardy person and can take it, check out Mineral King for a touch of this fun, easy way to ski. If, on the other hand, you're a not quite up to the area, do try cross-countrying it. Any patch of snow will do.

Suppose, like Jim and Chris, you don't have a whole weekend to spend. You would like to get out someplace close and get in a little nose-nipping, hill-zipping. Easy. Just slightly Northeast of Los Angeles, in the Angeles Crest are a number of good areas, suitable to both kinds of skiing. Mount Baldy has a few good fast slopes and Table Mountain is full of beginner's easy, rolling hills. It lies just North of Pasadena and is less than an hour from the hart of Hollywood. Take your choice, fast zips, slow runs or cross-country. No matter what your fancies or fantasies, you'll have no trouble finding them here.



Some of the finest ski slopes in the country—with lots and lots of soft white powder covering high, whiz happy slopes—are only a few hours of travel from most of California.





Jim is an avid skier and has been on most of the country's better slopes. He's so into it, that he is co-founder, and currently president of a groovy local ski club, The Ski Closet. Chris hails from the New England states where learning to ski is a natural part of growing up.



If you have just a bit more time, do try Big Bear. It can be done in one full, fast day but I'd suggest making a weekend of it. This was the place Jim and Chris finally decided to try. It's close to L.A., it's easy to get to and from and offers a fine, wide multitude of facilities. A little trip East on the San Berdu Freeway and a quick North turn-off onto Highway 30 continuing along California 18 will bring you right to the cheerful friendliness of Big Bear. It too, is a yearlong resort area but it changes over during the spring and summer months into a terrific fishing and boating area. There's still snow even during these warmer months on the tops of it's nine-thousand foot peaks. It is far too soft and mushy then for anything but just admiring or playing. Still, building snowmen in July might be fun, if it turns you on.

It's the winter months in Big Bear that we are most interested in right now. The deep whiteness engulfs the whole area around the lake, making it useable for any winter sport that you'd like to try. Skiing remains the big draw here as the little community has some very fine slopes. The first of these is directly Southeast of the lake and close enough to the small town so all the activity on the ski runs is fully visable from Big Bear. Logically named The Goldmine, its snow runs are set over, above and around a long ago abandon mine shaft. It's all perfectly safe, and attracts a beginner's crowd. There are a couple of long runs for the more advanced skier, but it's more popular with the new student. It does boast a fine ski school with friendly, patient instructors.

Jim, being a very good skier and familiar with nearly all the ski runs around Los Angeles, had chosen the other, more famous slope for he and Chris. Jim is an avid skier and has, at one time or another, been on most of the country's better slopes. He's so into it, that he's co-founder, and currently president of, a groovy local ski club, The Ski Closet. Chris hails from the New England states where learning to ski is a natural part of growing up. They were both ready to fly into energetic snow leaps then and there. The hour was a bit too late though, and they decided to wait for an early morning start. Finding a place to stay overnight proved to be no problem. The facilities at Big Bear run the gamet from plastic modern, neon screaming motels to several charming little rustic Alpine type lodges. The boys opted for the latter. The snow clung in high, wind swept



piles all the way up to the roof of the little chalet where they spent the night. Inside a huge, stone fireplace crackled out the fragrant warmth of pungent, burning pine. The crackling of the flaming pine logs inside were answered by the huge pine trees that sprang up between the cabins outside, brushing their frosted limbs against the snow clad roof. The guys were easily lulled into a comfortable togetherness. The warmth from the fire, the whispering wind and the prospects of an exciting tomorrow, soon brought on a pleasant drowsiness, and later, a blissful sleep.

There must be some unspoken agreement among all snow people early rising is contagious. At that very first shaft of light cutting through the sky and falling in a blinding burst on the banked snow, Chris and Jim were up quickly and ready to get on their way to the waiting slopes. Once outside they did have to stop and just admire. It's really hard to recover from the grandeur of these surroundings, high mountains snapping to glittering, snow crested life in the first zaps of early morning sun. Icicles hung in foot long jagged gleaming crystal off the eaves of the roof. A simple pleasure . . . some long ago, almost forgotten childhood joy . . . breaking off an icicle and sucking on it. It's all here, the remembrances, the then and now joys . . . all here for complete and instant enjoyment.

However, in spite of all this cool adventure, icicles don't quite make it as a breakfast to help through a snow flurried, active morning. It was off in search of food. A small, family type cafe provided the perfect meal to match the mood of Big Bear. The stacks of buckwheats with hot maple syrup, eggs and bacon, and endlessly flowing hot chocolate was so good that the temptation to linger over it was hard to resist but the magnetic pull of those frosty peaked slopes was much too strong. They ate hurriedly. Jim did manage to grab a couple of oranges and some bars of chocolate for later. Oranges chilled in snow when you're tired and thirsty . . . well, you really have to try it!

Jim had brought along all his own equipment, attached to the back of the car in those neat little ski racks but they had to make a quick stop at Sno-Rents for Chris. Choosing skis is easy, according to Jim. It should be done by the weight and size of both the ski and the wearer, matching one to the other. It's a matter



The boys opted to spend the night in one of the several charming alpine-type lodges at Big Bear. The snow piled up around the roof of the little chalet made the cozy interior seem all the more inviting.











The crackling of the flaming pine logs inside were answered by the sound of huge pine branches brushing against the snow clad roof. The guys were lulled into a comfortable togetherness. The warmth of the fire, and the prospects of an exciting day soon drew Chris and Jim into a cozy intimacy that could be understood only by very close friends.

entirely up to the individual. The ski-shoes turned out to be the most important thing. They must fit well, allowing no room at all for slippage. Jim's own boots were his most expensive investment. He'd had them foam-rubber filled while his feet were inside them to insure a perfect fit. After finally deciding, they came up with a pair of plastic clumpies for Chris. They loaded them, along with the other rented equipment, on to the car along with Jim's and were on their way.

Snow Summit, as it's more properly called, is only a scant twenty minutes from Big Bear. The entire area is more like a small city. It was quite a surprise to the guys, leaving the quiet of the cabin and cafe and be thrust into the fun jumbled, well populated activity at the Summit. They hopped around, quickly unloading and getting all set up for their plunge down the ski runs. Before starting up the spectacular ski-lift they had a couple of mugs of steaming hot cider, liberally laced

with rum, to help keep out the cold. This left a warm glow just right for a cold morning. The guys drank up and were off in search of the one ski-run that would really do it for them.

The very top slope of the Summit is long and difficult. It contains two fast, hard downhill runs. The most difficult of these is the Summit Run itself. This blinding white corridor zig-zags, flashing fast, between dangerous giant pines and half-hidden boulders. It's almost a straight line down and must be attempted by only the most accomplished skier who can make it without a nasty tumble. The other slope, Miracle Mile, is wider without all the dangers of hidden rocks and clumps of trees. This apparently safer run is a bit deceptive because it's still a fast, throat clutching whoosh straight to the bottom. Only the really experienced skier should try it.

To get to the top of either run, Ski Summit has an incredible ski-lift. It starts at the lodge, passing two unloading stations. The trip is done in chair lifts. The lift alone is worth the trip. It's a breath grabbing up-thrust over snowy hills and peaks dotted with giant pine. Definitely not for the weak of heart, those wide open chairs have only a slim bar of metal between you and all the open space to the ground below. At high-point, it's a straight down drop of twelve-hundred feet. It circles back at the top way-station where Jim and Chris popped open the protective bar to glide out onto the start of their down hill run. Now, the joys of ascending over, they are faced with getting back down again. There's only one way, of course . . . ski.

Both boys assume the all important position of beginning. A knee-bent crouch tips the ski-points just above the frosty white powder, and a quick push-off with the ski-poles sends up a shimmering, high spin of sun glittered snow. They are off in a flash of cold white. It begins now, the head spinning, teeth chattering fun. Grabbing and holding on to skiing's nearly undefinable pleasures, it's like flying on your feet, straight down a mountain of frosted white glass. One long, swift, head dizzying, breath tearing plunge brings the guys right back to the cozy warmth of the ski-lodge in only a couple of minutes. All this preparation and work for only a couple of minutes on that hill of glass? If you have to ask, it's clear that you've never skied! Was it all worth it? You bet it was!





# THE OFF- OFF

special report

## BROAD LAUNCH

For longer than most of us can remember, the Broadway theatre has been a dwindling phenomenon, reduced to a market place for the three or four successful big musicals of the season, plus a few imports, brought into New York only after they have scored a financial success elsewhere. The combination of more militant theatrical unions, goaded on by the narrow-minded greed of some producers and demanding a bigger piece of the production pie; zooming production costs; fear and urban blight; and the fragmentation of the "mass audience" have eliminated genuinely creative production, and led to commercial packaging of "sure-fire" hits. More creatively adventurous productions were forced to move to the realms of Off-Broadway.

But now the same creeping afflictions that have left Broadway an artistic cripple are encroaching on Off-Broadway as well. Such productions of fond memory as "Little Mary Sunshine," Bill Ball's production of Chekhov's "Ivanov," David Ross's long string of classical revivals at the 4th Street Theatre, and many others of similar renown, would now be utter impossibilities Off-Broadway. Nowadays, economic survival Off-Broadway demands small casts, economical productions, and avoidance of risks — creative or otherwise. Several of the Off-Broadway theatres have gone under, and of those that remain, occupancy may be intermittent.

Now it's Off-off-Broadway's turn: It looms larger and larger as the only arena left for the new or experimental writer,



## THE CITY

BY NEAL WEAVER

# BROADWAY ING PAD

and an Off-off-Broadway showcase comes, more and more, the only avenue by which new plays can reach commercial production. (The number of successful commercial productions which were first seen Off-off-Broadway is an impressive one: "Dames At Sea" and "Why Hanna's Skirt Won't Stay Down" were first seen at the now-defunct Cafe Cino. "The Boys in the Band" was originally a showcase production which moved to Off-Broadway. And Terrance McNally's "Bad Habits" really hit the jack-pot by opening Off-off-Broadway, then moving on to Off-Broadway, and finally to Broadway itself. "Hotel Baltimore" was an Off-off-Broadway production by the Circle Theatre Company, till producer Kermit Bloomgarden saw it, and transferred it to the Circle in the Square. "Let My People Come" began as a low-budget non-equity production which immediately scored enough of a success to achieve Off-Broadway status.

Another important aspect of the Off-off-Broadway scene is the fact that it is almost the only place where minority theatre, or plays geared to a limited or special audience, can find house-room. Much of the theatrical activity that has emerged from the Women's Lib movement, or from the increase in gay awareness, has first shown its head Off-off-Broadway.

In this vein, three recent productions, all dealing with gay life to a greater or lesser degree, have appeared Off-off-Broadway for limited runs, and have already reopened under more commercial auspices, or are scheduled to do so.

"The City," a motorcycle musical presented by the Tokyo Kid Brothers at La Mama E.T.C. transferred for a longer run at the Cricket Theatre during October. "Brothers and Sisters," a gay musical with a backstage setting, was unveiled for a brief engagement at the New York Theatre Ensemble, and at last report was scheduled for an Off-Broadway opening in November. And "Naomi Court," a drama by Michael Sawyer, opened as a showcase but has already settled in for what seems to be a successful commercial run at Stage 73.

"Bike Riders in the Sky"

The Tokyo Kid Brothers are a sort of floating commune group of young Japanese performers. They first appeared in New York City in 1970, with two

productions: "The Golden Bat" and "Coney Island Play." In the course of a brief run, they reaped kudos from a number of the critics, including Clive Barnes. This year's offering, "The City," is indeed a motorcycle musical, and an odd and rather lovely thing it is. I saw it early in its run at La Mama, when it was still undergoing revisions and changing from performance to performance, but even in its unfinished state, it had a rare charm.

I was fearful at first that it was going to be a forlorn and outdated rehash of "Hair," but it proved to be richer, gentler, and more purposeful than that. Although it is in some respects naive (and the naivete is a very real part of its charm), its point of view is complex, and the overall effect is tantalizingly ambiguous.



The gang revs up for action in "The City," a motorcycle musical created by The Tokyo Kid Brothers, which was unveiled at the La Mama E.T.C., and subsequently moved to an Off-Broadway theatre.



## THE CITY/Continued

The show centers on a Tokyo motorcycle gang. They are looking for love and freedom, and they cling to their group solidarity as the only protection against a tough and unsympathetic world, and a straight society which regards them simply as hooligans. But they don't always know how to handle love when it comes to them, and they are never quite sure what to do with their freedom. They are gallant, attractive, and a little sad. And somehow doomed. One of the, Ryu (Ryusaku Shinsui) has fled the responsibilities of a wife and child for the more tenuous relationships of the gang. He takes up with a girl-friend, and fleetingly becomes involved with Paul (Paul Waki), the "Spade" who is a perennial outcast because he is the half-breed son of a black G.I. and a Japanese girl.

The plot, in so far as there is one, concerns a battle for possession of the gang's turf: an uptight community has complained of the roaring cycles. The city has declared their meeting ground off-limits to them, and decreed that it will be the site of — horrors of horrors — a new housing project. They break through the barriers that have been erected against them for a last fling, and in something

resembling a Japanese game of "Chicken", Paul is killed.

The guards (Koichi Makigami and Shoichi Saito), who represents the establishment and the forces of law and order, are presented as a low comedy team, blending Kibuki stylization, music-hall zest and Keystone Cop zaniness. But they too are allowed a certain dignity — a human concern and a sense of real responsibility. At the end, when Paul has died, one of them cries out bitterly, "I am deeply ashamed that someone has been killed." It's an oddly moving moment.

The company seems ultimately to have more heart than head, and all too often the show succumbs to a kind of muddle-headed sentimentality. But the attitudes of its young people are authentic, however realistic, and thoroughly touching. And fortunately, there's always an ironic twist, an incisive bit of insight, or an appealing touch of madness to rescue the proceedings just when they seem about to flounder. Ultimately the show's vision of the world is a bleak one, but the gloom is mitigated by the charm, the rip-roaring vitality, the talent, and the wistful optimism of the cast. It's not for every taste, perhaps, but it does provide a fascinating insight into the youth culture in a context that is — for most of us — exotic.



Paul (Paul Waki), right, is an outcast within the gang because of his half-breed status; his mother was Japanese, his father a black G.I. He is befriended by Ryu (Ryusaku Shinsui), left.



## BROTHERS AND SISTERS

"Brothers and Sisters" (not to be confused with the restaurant / cabaret / bar of the same name) is a forthrightly gay musical set in the world of Broadway gypsies: the kids who work (usually in the chorus) in Broadway musicals. Its hero, William (Jay Lowman) is a boy from the sticks who comes to New York hoping to make it in the theatre. He moves in with three roommates in a one bedroom apartment: one boy, Joel (Bill Stratton), and two girls, Alice and Judy (Meg Bussert and Linda Rae Hager). The boy is gay, and the two girls are frustrated. (Judy goes so far as to sing a song called "Where Have All the Straight Men Gone Blues?"). William himself is somewhat undecided: fascinated by the gay scene, but not yet quite ready to make a public commitment. But soon a decision is forced on him. He finds himself pursued from two directions. Alice's ex-husband Brian (Steve Nisbet) just happens to be gay (it was a marriage of convenience) and also the author of an upcoming Off-Broadway musical. He immediately manifests an interest in William. But simultaneously Caroline (Sally Sockwell) turns up — William's home-town girl-friend who has followed him to the city in hot pursuit. It's no great surprise when he ultimately





sends Caroline home, and goes off into the night with Brian.

In its Off-off-Broadway incarnation, it was a likeable show, with a lot of things to recommend it — and a lot of things that could stand some improvement. There are excellent scenes here and there in James Ackerson's book, but the overall feeling was slightly lethargic. Both Mr. Ackerson's lyrics and the score by Darryl Curry showed distinct promise. And the direction by Ron Nash is slick and professional. But somehow it was hard to care too much about the characters. There is a determined concern with trivia — there is even a song called "Trivia" — there are too many "in" jokes, too many references to other musicals, too many people who impersonate Lily Tomlin. The result is that the show itself is in danger of turning trivial.

And it is a pity, because there is real talent here. And a real creative impulse, I think, behind the show as a whole, even though it is blunted in the execution. (There is also an appallingly vulgar gong about the raunchier aspects of gay life, called "You Ought Too" which was downright offensive. And I don't think I was alone in this reaction: people all around me in the theatre were groaning at its crudities. It is all the more destructive in that it is irrelevant to the plot, and out of keeping with the essentially gentle nature of the book and characters.) Hopefully by the time the show reaches Off-Broadway



Upper Left—William (Jay Lowman) is a boy from the sticks who comes to New York to make a career in the theatre. Bill Stratton is his gay butterfly of a roommate, Joel, in "Brothers and Sisters," produced Off-off-Broadway by the New York Theatre Ensemble, and tentatively scheduled for an opening Off-Broadway in November.

Above—Another of William's roommates, Alice (Meg Bussert, second from left) invites her playwright ex-husband, Brian (Steve Nisbet, left) and his producer (Marshall Thomas) to a party. The wine and the grass prove too much for William—but even in his befuddled state, he proves very attractive to Brian.

Below—Joel consoles himself for his failure to be cast in a Broadway musical by indulging in a brief fling with the stage manager he met at the audition (Neil Servatnick).







## BROTHERS AND SISTERS/ Continued

Left—William's home-town girl friend, Caroline (Sally Sockwell) follows him to the city, bent on marriage. But she proves to be a self-centered bully—and besides, William is more interested in Brian. So he sends her on her way.

Below — Brian and William find the rapport between them growing—and by the play's end, it seems that William may have acquired a role in a show as well as a lover.



it will be tightened up and toughened up.

Robert W. Baker's scenery was unusually lush for Off-off-Broadway (there was even a revolving stage, albeit tiny), clever, functional, and attractive. It was also inventive, getting maximum glamour out of minimal means in a way that brings to mind Peter Harvey's sets for "Dames At Sea" and "The Boys in the Band."

Jay Lowman, as William, proves himself an attractive young performer with a nice way with a song. But he is also a genuinely subtle actor, accurately capturing the tentative, non-committal air of a young man hovering on the brink of the gay life. And his befuddled first encounter

with smoking grass seemed accurately observed. Meg Bussert, as Alice, is perhaps the most finished, most professional member of the cast, with real sincerity in her acting, and a solid legit voice as well as a knack for show business razzmatazz. Unfortunately the playwright allows her character to dribble away ineffectually at the end, but she makes the most of everything she is given.

At the performance I saw, Steve Nisbet was indisposed, and author James Ackerson stepped into the show on one day's notice. He acquitted himself admirably, with poise and authority that belied his scanty preparation.



## NAOMI COURT

"Naomi Court," by Michael Sawyer, is a pair of inter-linked one-act plays dealing with the dangers of basing one's life and action in fantasy. The setting is an apartment house in NYC's East 70's, scheduled to fall to the wrecking ball. The two remaining tenants, Miss Dugan (Sally Gracie) and David (Jordan Charney) have lived in the building for more than twenty years, and are traumatized by the forced displacement from the place they have learned to call home.

Miss Dugan, in order to weather the storm, invents an imaginary lover and husband-to-be who is to rescue her from Naomi Court and introduce her to the kind of life she has always longed for (including tea at the Plaza and dinner at the Rainbow Room — with Cherries Jubilee!). David, a middle-aged homosexual whose one real lover opted some years back for a house in the suburbs, with wife and kids, makes a street-corner pickup to escape the loneliness of his last night in Naomi Court. But, of course, Miss Dugan's dream lover never materializes to claim her, and David's boyishly charming pickup turns out to be a sadistic and psychotic hustler and thief who subjects him to a night of terror and humiliation. Both excursions into fantasy end in disaster.

Playwright Sawyer has something of Tennessee Williams' knack for capturing





the poignant recollections and fantasies of the lonely and dispossessed, but his dramaturgy occasionally creaks, and director Ira Cirker is not always successful in providing remedies. The first act bears an unfortunately close resemblance to Williams' "Portrait of a Madonna" and "The Lady of Larkspur Lotion." And the author sets himself an almost impossible set of playwright problems when he actually sets out to show us the imaginary lover, Bunny Berry.

The second act, dealing with the encounter between David and the hustler, is more tightly constructed, more consistently dramatic, and more gripping. Its sensationalism is in danger of obscuring its dramatic point, but it works, and if the final catastrophe is horrific, it is also emotionally satisfying on a primitive level. (The woman behind me greeted it with an exclamation of, "Good!")

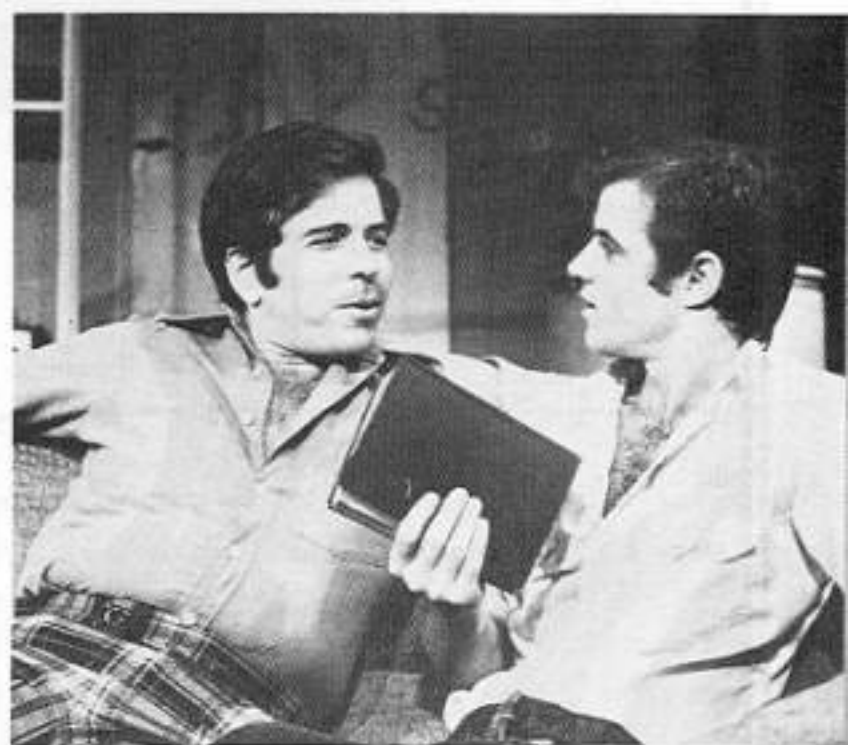
Black actor Terry Alexander brings ease and charm to the role of the building superintendent who is confidante to both David and Miss Dugan. Sally Gracie is more than competent but a little less than inspired as Miss Dugan. And Jordan Charney (once he escapes the sentimental excesses and cutesiness that he is burdened with in the first act) makes David's terror thoroughly convincing. Michael M. Ryan probably does all that can be done with the rather impossible role of the imaginary lover.

But it is the performance of Brad Davis as Harper, the hustler, which makes the

evening into something really special. In his photographs, Mr. David suggests the kind of big, good-looking actor who is pleasant to look at and boring to watch. In the flesh he's something else again, slighter, brighter, and a good deal more interesting. And his work here is nothing short of brilliant, sketching in with a sure hand the inherent stupidity beneath a veneer of cunning, the smouldering resentments, the cruelty, the irrational shifts between swaggering braggadocio and desperate insecurity. But most importantly, he also shows us why he is what he is. We perceive clearly the whole pattern of a life which blighted him and made him desperate for recognition and pride at the very outset. Consequently, he is always logical, even when he is most unpredictable. And he never entirely loses our sympathy, even when he is at his most appalling. Without that straight razor in his hand, he might be simply pathetic: a child, eager for approval. With it, he is terrifying. He captures the kid naivete as well as the knowing animal magnetism, the hunger for human contact as well as the cold-blooded detachment of a potential killer. But in all the lightning shifts, he never misses a transition. In short, he's an actor to be watched. He conjures up the same kind of excitement that was apparent in the early appearances of such actors as Al Pacino and George Peppard. But his style and personality are all his own. I suspect we'll be seeing more of him before long. ●

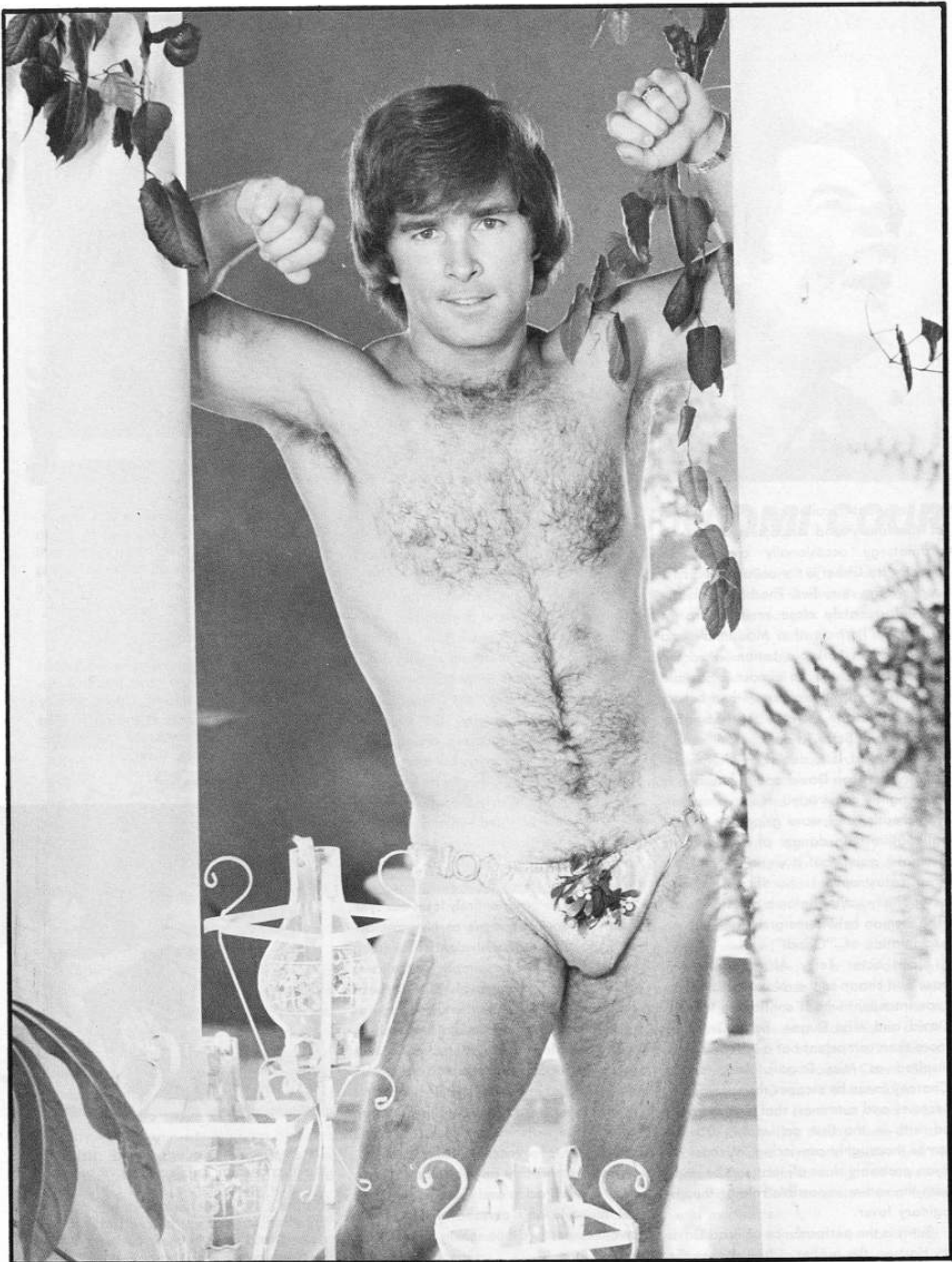
Above Left—Sally Gracie is Miss Dugan, a lonely spinster, and Michael M. Ryan is the imaginary lover she dreams will rescue her when she finds herself being evicted from the apartment where she has lived for 23 years in "Naomi Court."

Above—David, a fellow tenant (Jordan Charney) and Lenny, the building superintendent at Naomi Court (Terry Alexander) are guests at the party Miss Dugan throws to celebrate her engagement to her fantasy lover.



Later in the evening, David makes a street-corner pickup, and brings back to his apartment Harper (Brad Davis). But Harper's boyish charm conceals a psychopathic streak, and before the night is over, David finds himself locked in a life or death battle with the boy.







fashion

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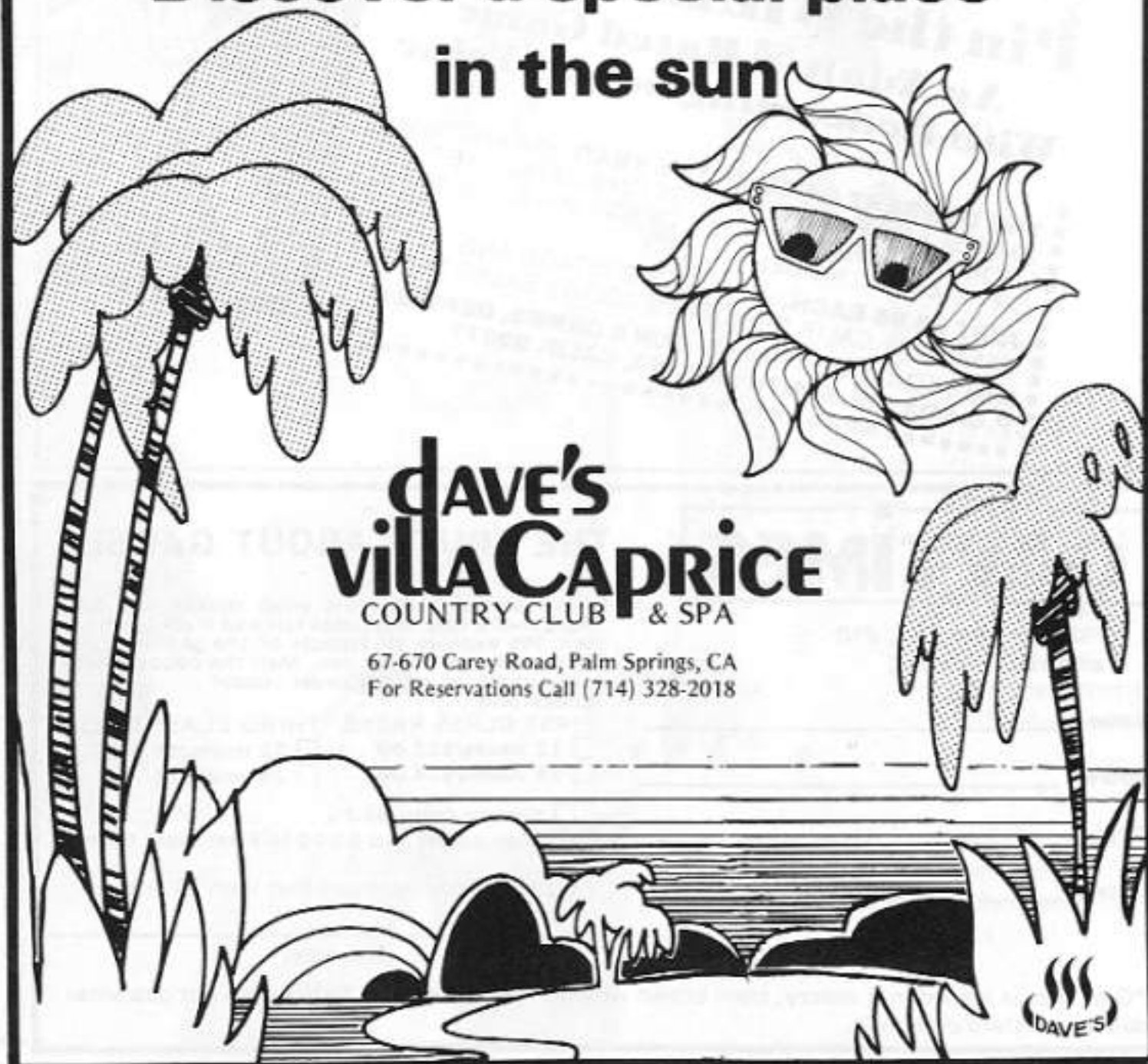


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Continued on Page 59

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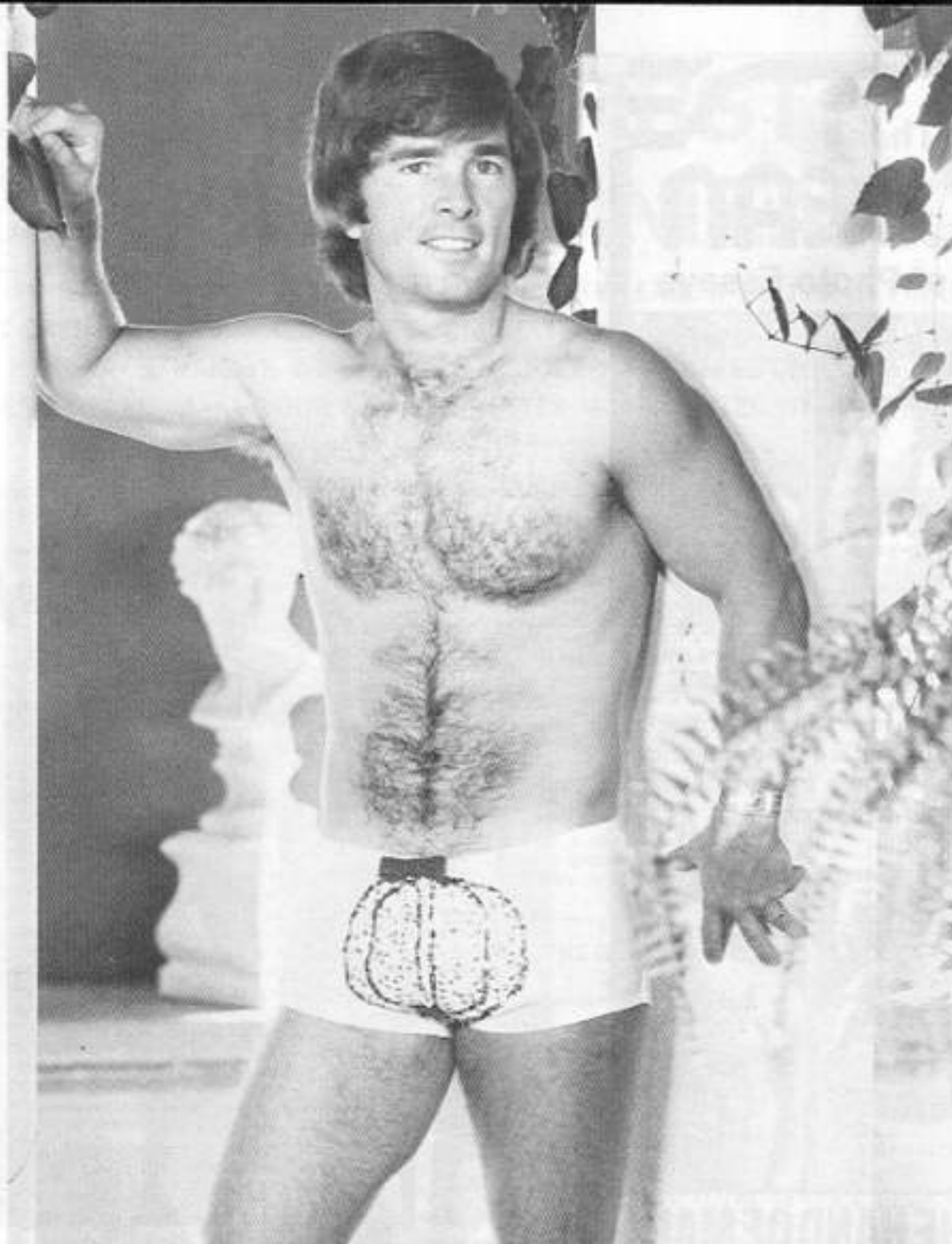
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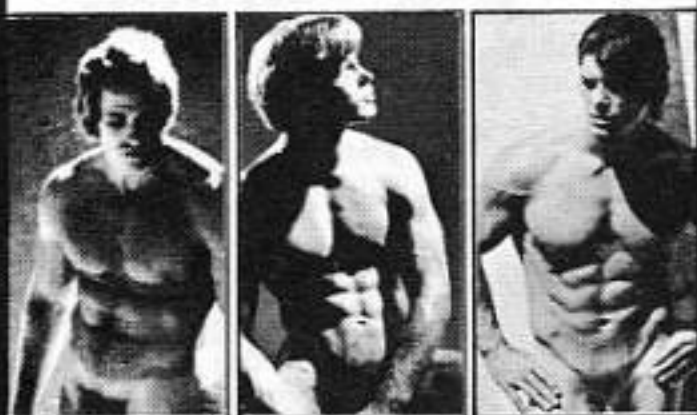
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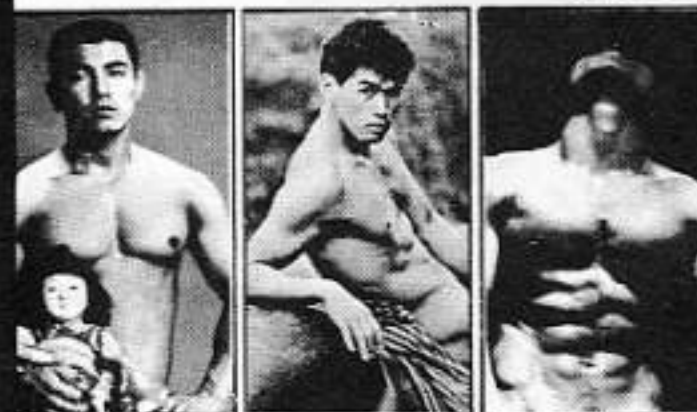
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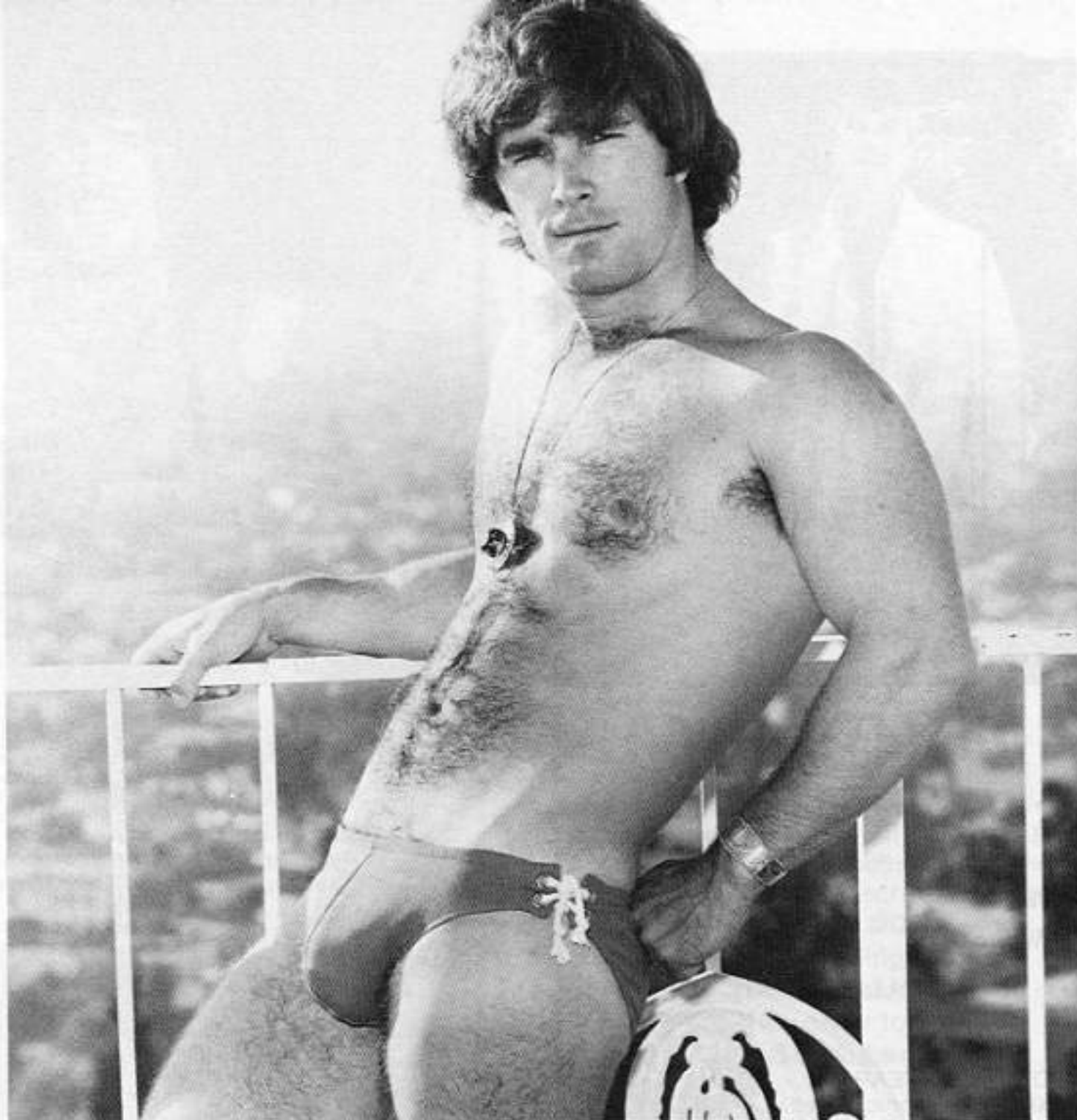
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# "Where It's At" is back!

Our October issue celebrated IN TOUCH's first anniversary—a year of success—virtually the nation-wide leader in gay awareness magazines. In that year, our staff has learned a great amount of facts about the gay subscription market, its spending power and individuality.

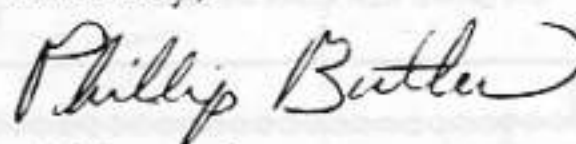
Starting with our first issue of IN TOUCH, we featured a four-page insert called "Where It's At." Compiled of businesses mostly within California, we were very soon inundated with requests to include many out-of-state listings. Comments continually arrived stating that the insert was a handy, removable guide for visitors to the West Coast. However, this very popular listing of bars, baths, dining and dancing, beaches, barbers and hotels, was bursting our old format, and was removed with the August issue.

IN TOUCH has started its nation-wide "Where It's At." The value of a 'local' business appearing in a national coffee-table publication, with our vast readership cannot be ignored. We've learned that our readership is of such an alert caliber, that a "repeat" listing does create the desired "remembrance" factor of valid, but unknown, out-of-town businesses, and in the most profitable manner to you.

Therefore, we have priced our new service to make your listing dollar do more for you—a long range benefit. The new "Where It's At" is grouped by categories, i.e., bookstores, clothing stores, etc., within the major areas of all the states and Canada. The original format continues—a third of a page in width and seven lines high. Our one time inclusion rate is \$10, but statistics show that a three consecutive issue repeat is the most effective, and this recommended quarterly service is \$25. As a courtesy, we will discount \$5 for that issue's "listing" in which a business has their paid "display" advertisement.

All in all, a very reasonable way for you to have nation-wide advertisement to an on-the-go clientele, who can't just ask anyone, "Where's it at?" Our IN TOUCH staff has tried to invite those businesses that should be made known to our ever increasing readership. And now that we've informed you of this opportunity, return the handy form today. Join the ranks of the nation's best of "Where It's At," and . . . be IN TOUCH.

Sincerely,



Phillip Butler.  
Advertising Director

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Continued on Page 71.



## "WHERE IT'S AT" Listing Form

Please furnish all necessary information for proper handling.

**SECTION A** 1) Name of business: \_\_\_\_\_

2) Business Address: (Street) \_\_\_\_\_

(City) \_\_\_\_\_ (State) \_\_\_\_\_ (Zip) \_\_\_\_\_

3) Business Telephone: # \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

4) Type of business: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION B** 1) Please type, or print, your "listing" (approximately 40 words – Do not include Sect. A information)

Note: We reserve the right to edit listings to meet space requirements.

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**SECTION C** Additional information and comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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**SECTION D** Where It's At application form:

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# special report - theatre

by Allan Leopold

## Sugar

THE GENIUS OF ROBERT MORSE AND CYRIL RITCHARD TURN "SOME LIKE IT HOT" INTO A NEW MUSICAL SMASH AT THE MUSIC CENTER

"Sugar" is what is known in the vernacular as a sparkling achievement. For once, a musical based on an old movie smash is far superior to its' source material. I feel this is very possibly due to the lively, elfin spirit of the evergreen English veteran, Cyril Ritchard, whose job it was to recreate the Gower Champion Broadway show for Music Center audiences. In the process, three new songs were written by Jule Styne to accommodate the brilliant baritone of Larry Kert. Unfortunately, Mr. Ritchard suffered a heart attack just prior to the West Coast premiere and understudy Joe Ross went on for him at my performance. Suffice it to say, Mr. Ross did a yeoman, eleventh-hour job with the role played by Joe E. Brown in the film. He was adroit and winning and thoroughly competent but, if ever a *raison d'être* for the star system existed, here is the positive proof. Stardom is more than competence. It is an extra something that strikes responsive chords in the hearts of audiences and causes them to react in such a way that the actor responsible becomes an indispensable commodity. When this occurs, the performer is elevated to a special niche in the hearts of the public where he remains to be cherished throughout his lifetime. A true star can make a poor show better. But a great star in a great hit is something that goes down in the history books. Such a rare event is the combination of Robert Morse and the part of Jerry. It is no secret at this point in time that he acts with skill and authority. The revelation here is that he has mastered the fine art of pantomime to the point where he is now in league with Marcel Marceau and Chaplin. It can further be pointed out that Mr. Morse has acquired genius. And that is why "Sugar" must be seen. As Joe, Larry Kert is never very happy or beguiling in skirts but he has something else that Mr. Morse hasn't. He has very possibly the finest singing voice in the contemporary musical theatre. *People In My Life* displays it to the fullest extent and, if any proof were needed, here it is. In the film, Marilyn Monroe's Sugar dominated everything. Her stage counterpart, Leland Palmer, is one more example of a talented lass who lacks that special magic. She dances with great, sinuous grace and her voice has both strength and flexibility. But charisma is a special recipe for just a chosen few. Steve Condos of the famed Condos Brothers, dances *Spats Palazzo* with a staccato style that is irresistible. But, then, all of the choreography by Gower Champion and Denny Martin Flinn is first-rate. Alvin Colt has designed bright Broadway costumes and Robin Wagner has come up with a large order of sets that are among the best I have ever seen. *Penniless Bums* is a marvelous opening number and the title song, *Doin' It For Sugar*, is unendingly delightful. Whistle it going home? I wanted to sing it in my seat as I listened to it. The invention of this show is everywhere, from the machine gun silhouettes to the *Naughty Old Men* ballet. And the humor is catchy and rib-tickling:



Above—Larry Kent, Leland Palmer and Robert Morse in *Sugar*.



Above—Leland Palmer and Larry Kent. Below—Joe Ross.







Steve Condos, Robert Morse and Larry Kent

"I always carry a flask of bourbon just in case."

"In case of what?"

"In case I feel like a little bourbon."

"What is this trophy for?"

"Water Polo."

"Isn't that terribly dangerous?"

"I'll say. I had two ponies drown under me."

"Why would a guy want to marry a guy?"

"Security."

You'll be secure in your enjoyment of "Sugar." I'll stake my reputation on that.

## Seesaw

"Seesaw," the new musical in the Ahmanson spun around the threads of William Gibson's "Two For The Seesaw," works

because Michael Bennett is one of the best choreographers we have and, as the director, he has kept the show on its toes. Lucie Arnaz is a fine dancer and she stuns with The Party's On Me, written especially for her. John Gavin is called upon to dance We've Got It at the start of the second act and his competence comes as a distinct surprise. Tommy Tune, of course, was born to dance and It's Not Where You Start, involving a stage full of dancing balloons, has gotta be the most imaginative number yet devised for a musical show. Cy Coleman's music, with lyrics by Dorothy Fields, is bright and happy. Robin Wagner's scenic designs, lit by Jules Fisher and dotted with Ann Roth's breezy costumes, are just the backdrop for a smitten New York pair. Even the lines are good:

Gittal: "It's a \$99.50 hide-a-bed but at those prices I'm not hiding it."

Jerry: "If you don't get up, your blood will rust."

When all is sung and danced, "Seesaw" is still awfully serious material upon which to string bouncy gags. The heavily dramatic story, replete with a hemorrhaging heroine, is not stuff to be taken lightly. So the plot does sag and get in the way every now and then. But Lucie Arnaz is a phenomenon like Liza Minnelli. She can belt out a song like a true veteran. Her voice is sure and on pitch, she can act and, as I've said before, she is one whale of a dancer. Further, the lady is a revelation in the way she manages believable Brooklynese. Even Mr. Gavin can sing and, when he appears stripped in bed, the show could get all bent out of shape and still coast along on his. The handsome chorus boy line-up has been rehearsed within an inch of their lives which is what you might expect from a director who dances. ●

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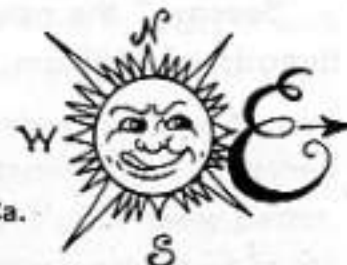
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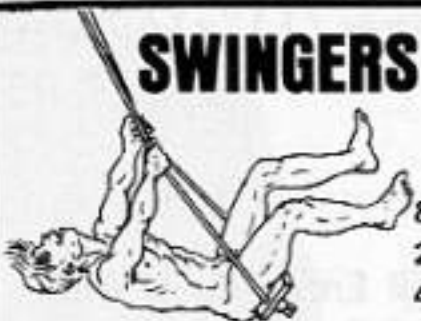


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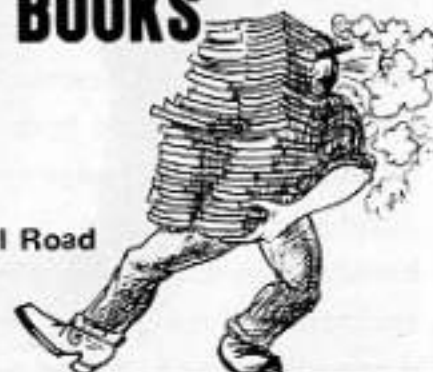
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# Good News

I'm afraid "Good News" in the Shubert is a far cry from that. It represents the vision of Harry Rigby who gave us "No, No Nanette" with the embalmed performance of the lovely June Allyson. Here we have a college musical razzmatazz, without any visible point, joining together Alice Faye and John Payne who haven't seen each other in 17 years. In the forties they starred on the Fox front lot in such divertissements as "Tin Pan Alley," "Hello Frisco Hello" and "Weekend in Havana," where almost no one has any weekends anymore. Now the pair have been reunited in the flesh on the Fox backlot where today stands the majestic Shubert Theatre. In front of the footlights, neither star exudes any charisma, they both are relics of a bygone era and, if they exhibited any talent, I failed to notice it. The book of the show is a bomb of the first order but Donald Saddler has inserted so many dances into it you almost fail to notice it is still cheese. But cheese it is, prime Limburger in fact, and the aroma snakes up the aisles in an overpowering fashion whenever the plot takes over. The humor is positively unbearable. Here are a few classic examples:

An ingenue examines a table of sorority hors d'oeuvres and observes:

"Nuts, nuts, nuts, nuts. There's that pesky fly again."

A sorority sister:

"Let him stay. He helps fill out the table."

And then, would you believe, a couple comes out and tap dances a number about a fly? Later, a recipe for slenderizing is delivered, sober-faced, to a frat man at the expense of his social life:

"Instead of potatoes, you give up tomatoes."

Well, you get the hang of it. The singing and dancing (and there is plenty of it, including a football ballet) is first-rate. Marti Rolph sings Just Imagine in a gorgeous soprano and The Varsity Drag is now in the national archives, still retaining its ability to arouse an audience. Stubby Kaye has shrunk with the years and is stuck with more than his share of exit-line clinkers. Alice Faye has been handed all the vine-covered Standards and she sings everything except Sweet Adeline. Mr. Payne has a locker room spiel to deliver to the football chorus boys in the second act and it and he are so bad that I won't touch on it further. In conclusion, you may have my share of "Good News." All except David Thome who has the most beautiful Rudolph Valentino-face I have ever seen on any chorus boy in my life. Hopefully, we will get together on an IN TOUCH interview soon.

—ALLAN LEOPOLD



"Whatta drag. Not one new face."

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# Maya Plisetskaya in CARMEN SUITE

What can you write when you are faced with stupifying greatness? Just be grateful that you are living in the same age alongside such artistes and flock to worship at the shrine of their talent. Such an experience occurred the other evening at the Shrine after I had waded through two-thirds of a tedious program of old Russian curiae. Finally, the third act curtain rose on the Carmen Suite, with choreography and libretto by Alberto Alonso, based on the novella by Prosper Merimee. A stark bull ring setting in deep carmine, flanked by rows of tall-backed chairs filled with the silhouettes of dark spectres, greeted me. The Bizet-Schedrin score began and the mercurial, legendary figure of Maya Plisetskaya appeared. The Russians cannot get enough of her nor can I. Each time I see her dance I am struck anew by the wonder of her. On this occasion, she brought along two partners who are well on their way to matching her artistry and moving into the rarified realm she now occupies. Much has been written of the Don Jose of Aleksander Godunov and it is entirely justified. His blond hair frames his face like a roof of thatched corn and his sinuous body undulates fire as he dances, his fingers clutching his muscular thighs. It's a new way of dancing and he mesmerizes audiences with it. Sergei Radchenko's Toreador is all brooding spirit. His spectacular body twitches and contorts with the passion of Spain and he matches Maya step for step. He wears a skin-tight Toreador costume of white satin with black piping. Unfortunately, at my performance, the seat of his tights bore an unsightly dark stain, the souvenir of some backstage smudge he



Maya Plisetskaya

doubtless was unaware of. When you are a star in white satin, you have to be doubly cautious. The set by Viktor Zavitayev, the lighting by Boris Leliukhin and the Alonso choreography were all superb. And the dancers were out of this world. A theatrical experience of this calibre comes along perhaps once or twice in a lifetime and I shall never forget this one.

—ALLAN LEOPOLD

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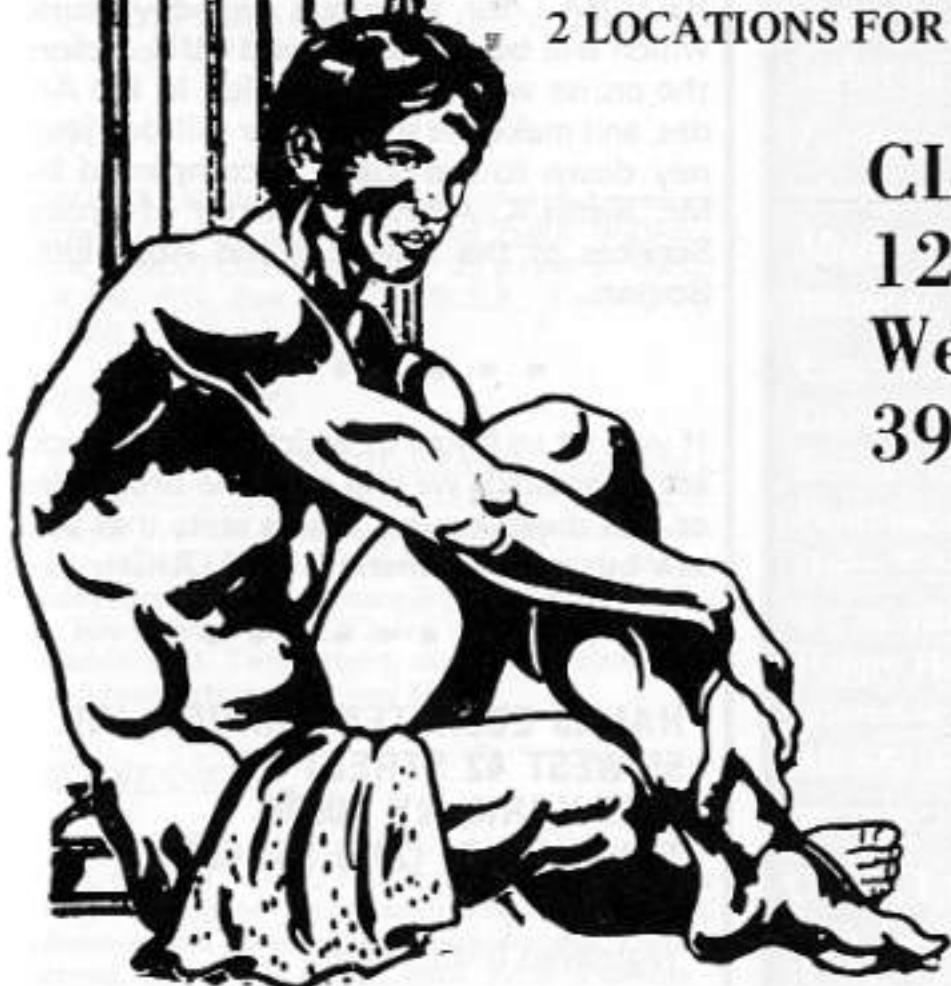
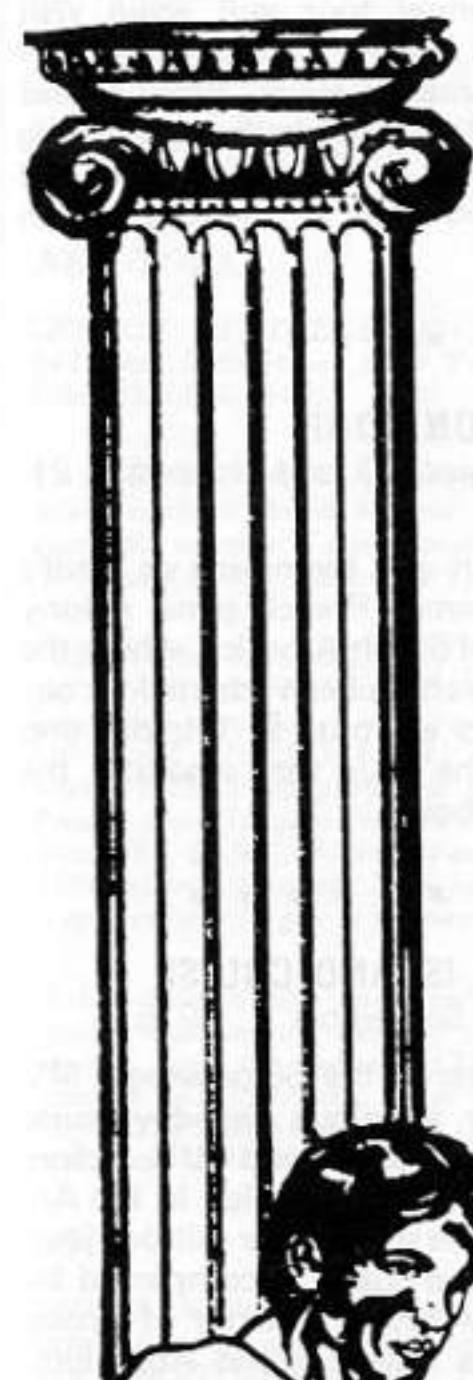
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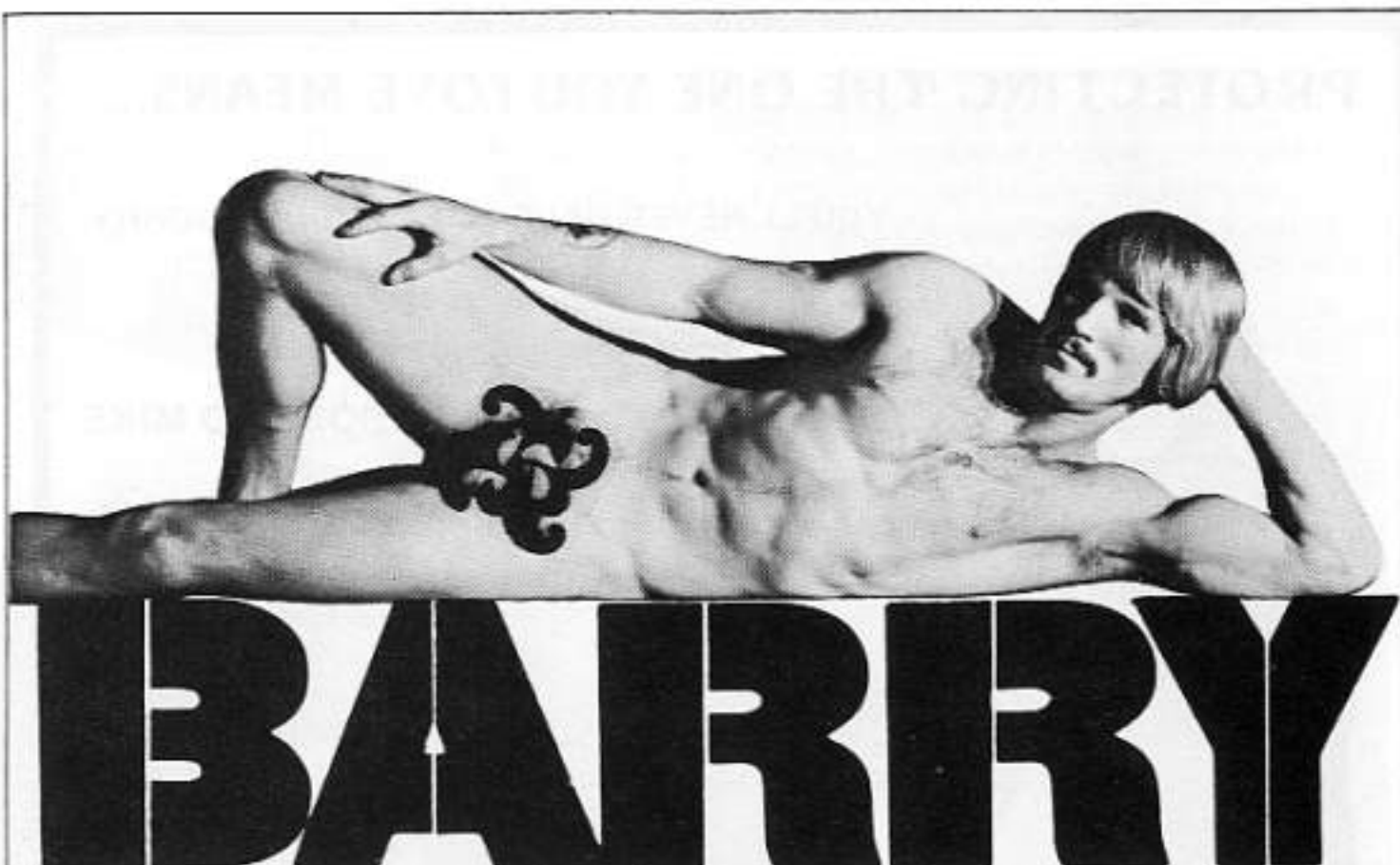
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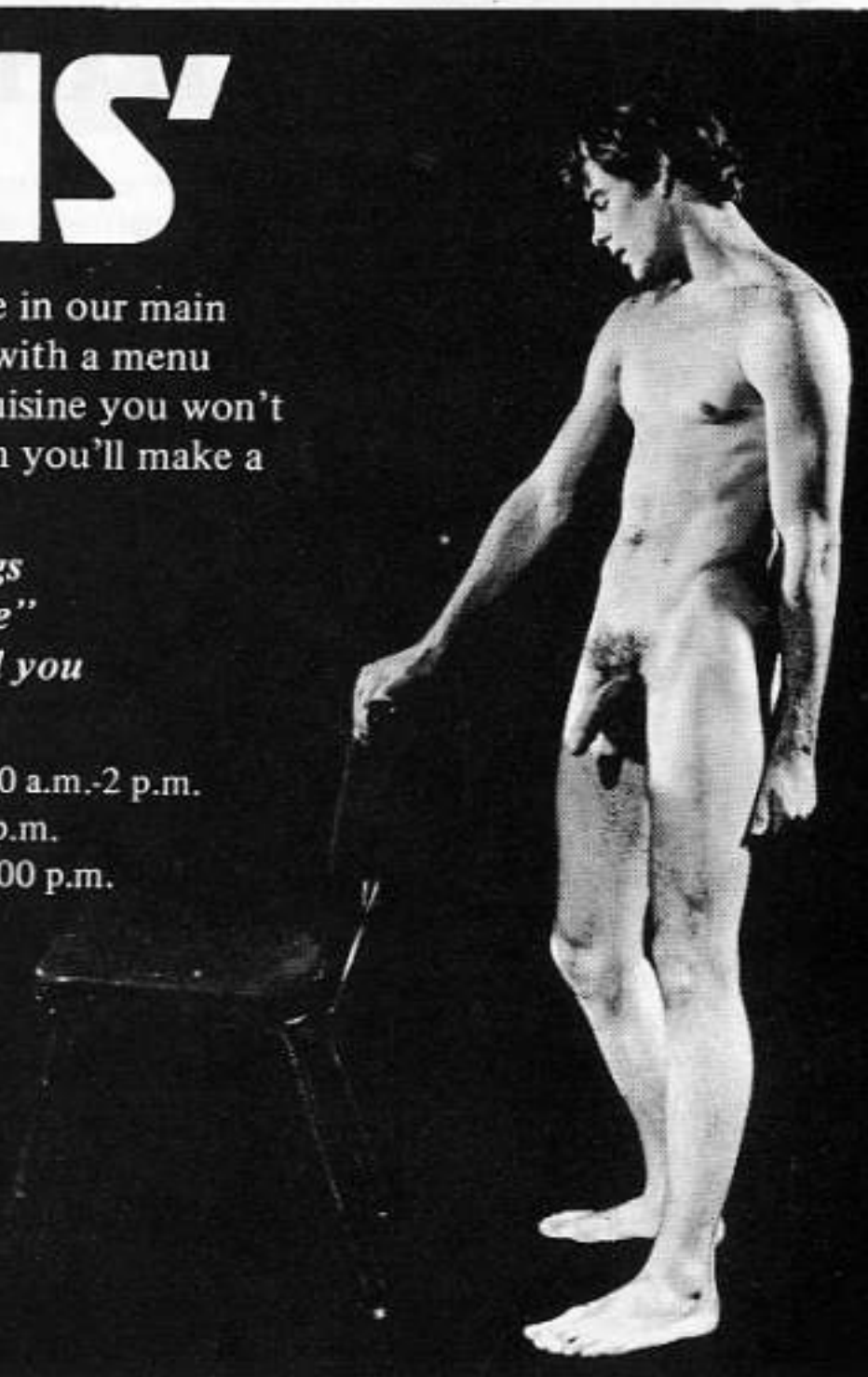
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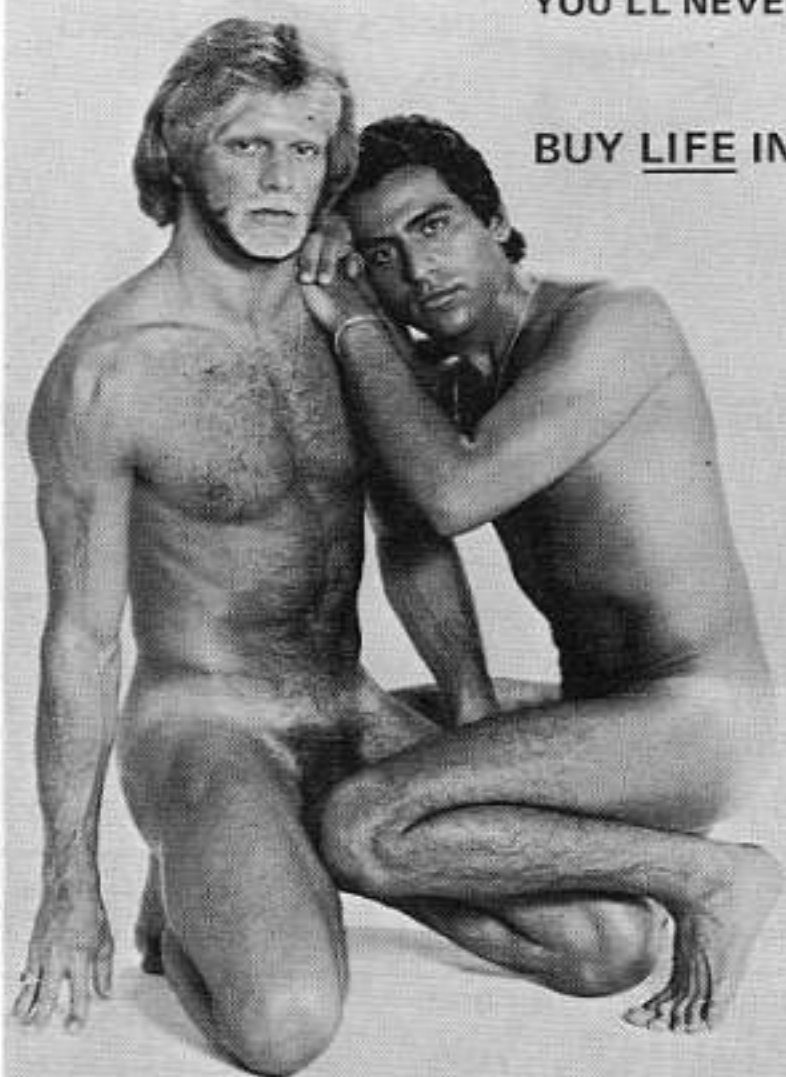
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## special film report

**BY JOHN MARVIN**

# FLESH GORDON

For gay audiences the world of the heterosexual skin flicks is usually a frustrating and largely unsatisfying one, consisting of a few very attractive guys buried and ignored in a morass of female flesh. They hold interest only for the most dedicated film buff or the most desperate voyeur.

However, one hetero "nudie" currently making the rounds is to be highly recommended, not only to gay audiences for its gorgeous hero and campy humor, but to anyone interested in innovative, off-beat entertainment. It is called "FLESH GORDON," a parody on the classic old Universal serial about the hero of the future. "FLESH GORDON" started out as an ambitious pornographic feature, but along the way its creators got carried away with themselves and wound up with a kinky, outrageous, and thoroughly entertaining film which is successful on nearly every level on which you would care to judge it.

Probably the only casualty has been the sex, in fact. All the hardcore footage has been removed, although there is still a good deal of nudity and simulated sexual

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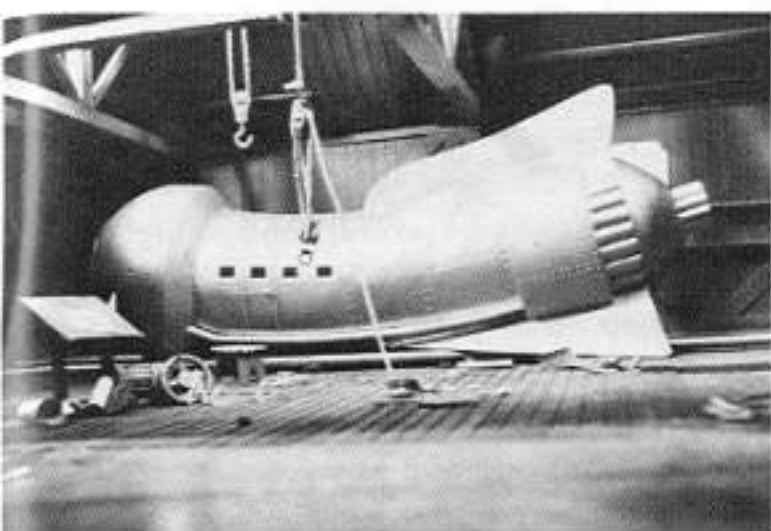
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The film contains some excellent special effects to give the story an almost bizarre atmosphere. Emperor Wang's fearsome rapist robots are at far left, while at center, Doctor Jerkoff's interplanetary rocket is about ready for space flight. A horny monster, right, carries off the heroine in the film's exciting climax. The monster rips off the girl's clothes so he can "get a look at those titties," something we've been waiting a lifetime to hear one of them admit.

activity. But what has been added is sharp satire and some of the finest special effects to be seen in any movie in many a year.

Much of the work on the film's animated monsters was done by Jim Danforth, whom many special effects and fantasy freaks, myself among them, consider the most brilliant table-top animator of all time. Considering the limitations of budget and material under which he was working in this film, he has turned out some work that could easily rival that of his mentor and competitor, Ray Harryhausen. For reasons best known to Danforth, however, he has requested his name be removed from the credits, and so all that remains of him are a curious anagram of his name in the titles and his distinctive genius.

These are certainly some of filmdom's most unique monsters, too! Where else are you going to find a hero battling a 10-foot self-contained penis, or see the heroine carried off by a scaly, 60-foot critter who rips off her dress while murmuring, "Hey, let's get a look at those titties, baby?"

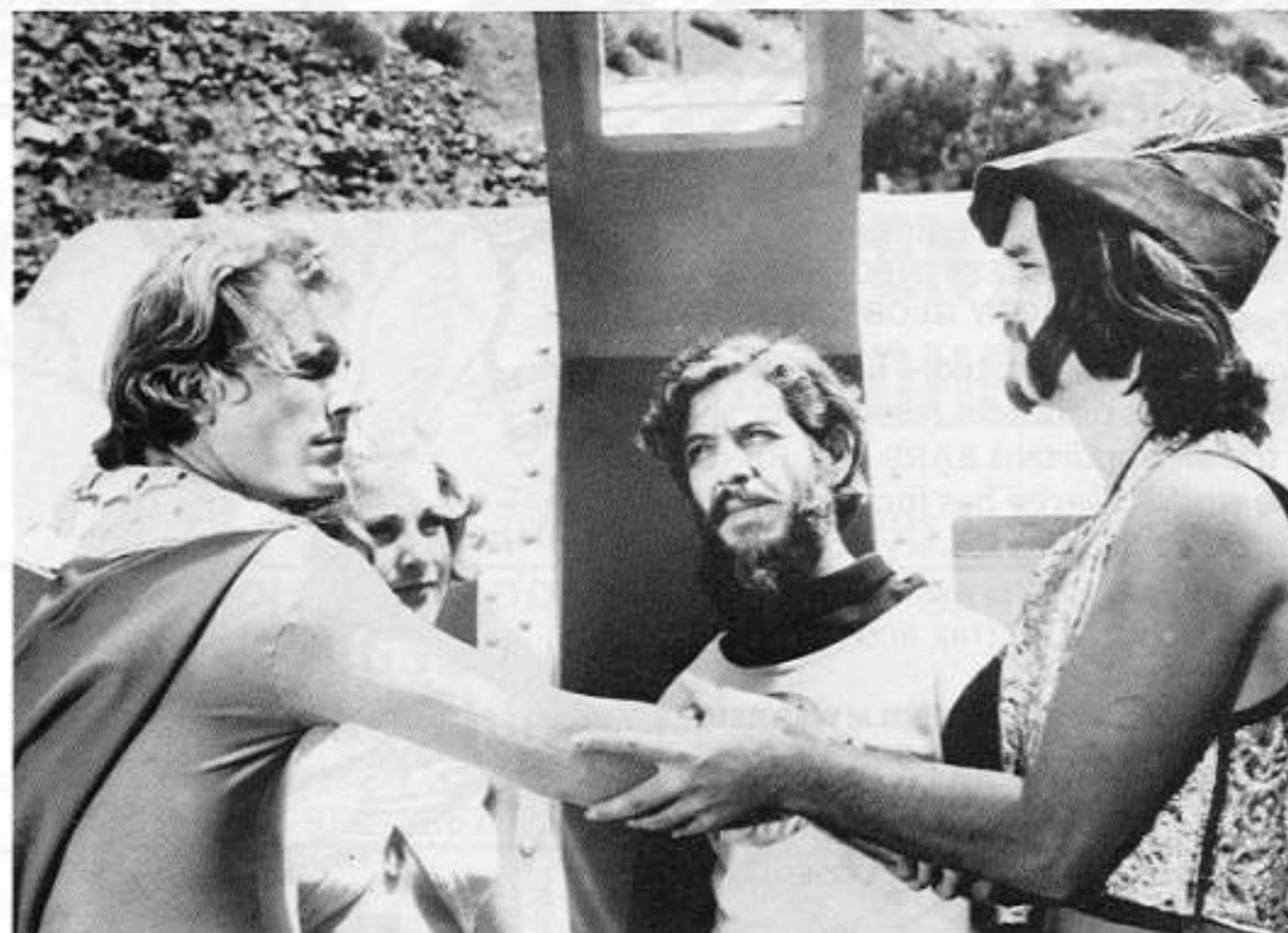
While "FLESH GORDON" is a movie that even a nouvelle vague critic would have trouble analyzing seriously, it is still interesting to take a good look at its attitude toward homosexuality in the light of the usual approach to the subject in hetero sexploits. Straight skin flicks usually treat lesbianism with interest and in a sympathetic light — in fact, some distributors will not even consider handling a "nudie" that does not contain a lesbian scene — but male homosexuality is strictly verboten in them. The only male homosexuals ever seen are ludicrous, sick old men in half-drag or foppish, nelly queens who enjoy being beaten up by all the straight numbers whom they approach indiscriminately. Not so in "FLESH GORDON."

To be sure, the film has its lesbians — a band of Amazon warriors who attempt to



Above—Heroine Dale Ardor demonstrates her knitting skills to Prince Precious in a quiet interlude in the forest, while boyfriend Flesh Gordon is off skinny-dipping with the Prince's subjects.

Below—Flesh Gordon swears eternal friendship with Prince Precious as Dale and Dr. Jerkoff look on.





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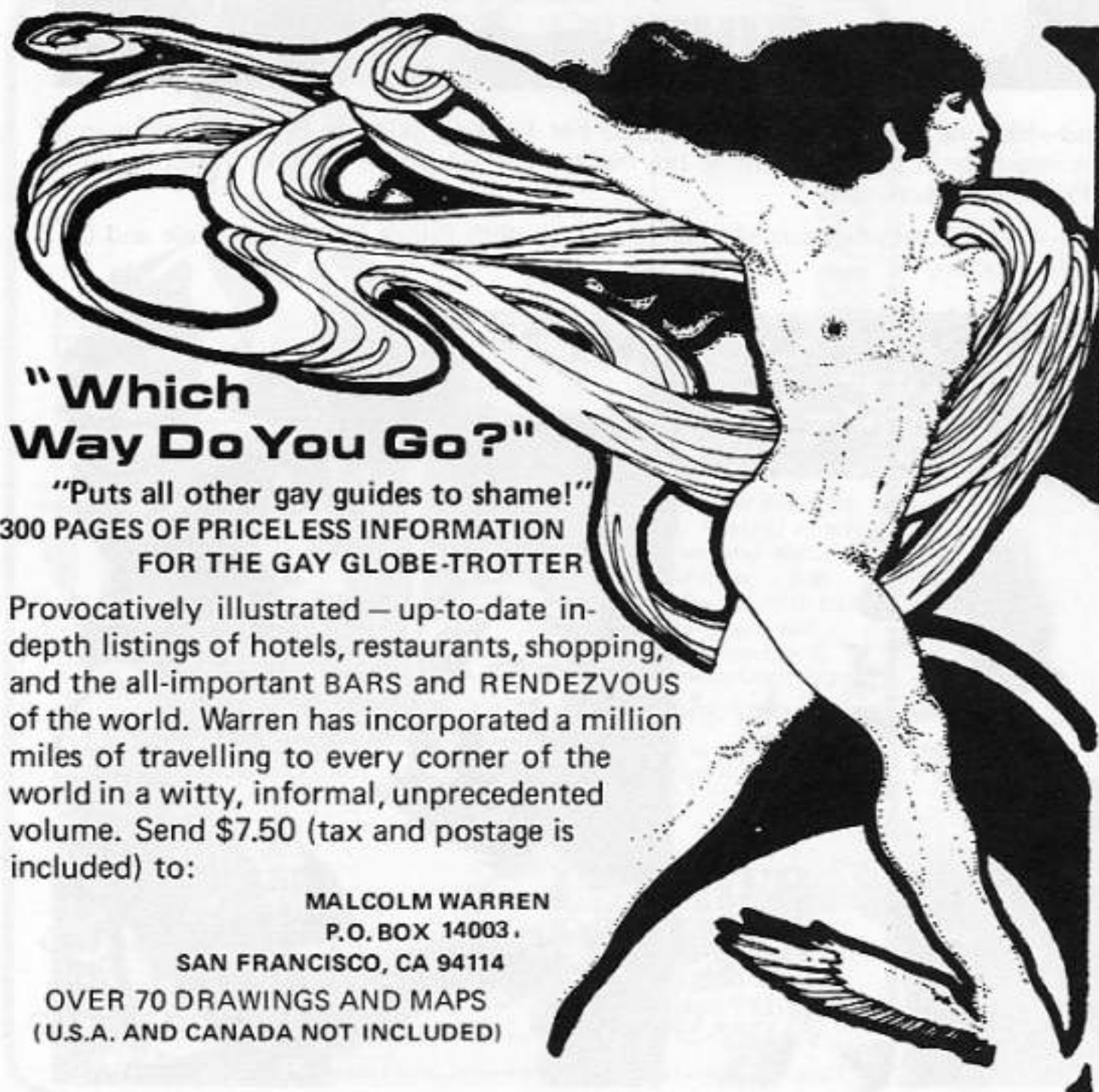
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Special Film Report / Continued

rape the heroine. (Interestingly, the heroine does not enjoy it — a radical departure from most skin flicks.) But it also has male homosexuals, and entirely sympathetic ones at that! The film's secondary hero, the good prince who was deposed and exiled by the evil villain, is a very sweet fellow named Prince Precious, who heads a band of pretty young men in Peter Pan outfits, and whom Flesh Gordon helps return to power. And most significant of all, when Prince Precious saves Flesh's life (a unique event in itself), Flesh has not a single qualm about displaying his gratitude physically in the Prince's bed! They spend an idyllic interlude in the Prince's woodland hideaway, and the film ends with Flesh, although still a confirmed heterosexual, promising to return in friendship to the planet again. As "peaceful sexual coexistence" propaganda, "FLESH GORDON" is one of the most positive statements yet!

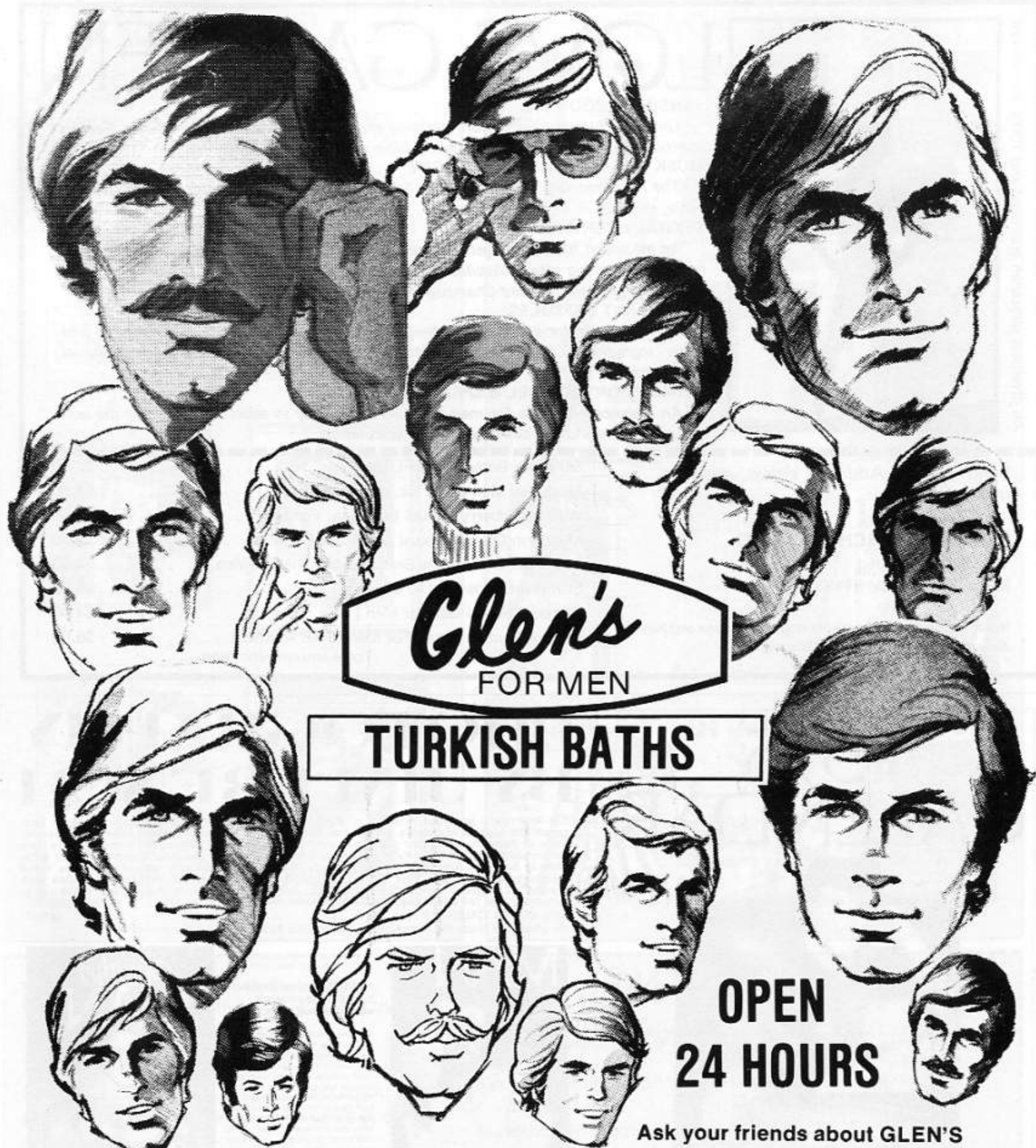
The cast suffers a bit from the film's pornographic origins, having been chosen more for their (ultimately unused) sexual prowess than for their acting ability, but they manage to at least hold their own. Joseph Hudgins, as Flesh's scientist companion, Dr. Jerkoff, is adequate, as is Suzanne Fields as the heroine, Dale Ardor. William Hunt, as His Assholiness, Emperor Wang, is properly villainous, and even more heavily made up than was Charles Middleton in the original, if such a thing is possible.

As Flesh, indefatigable straight porno star Jason Williams is beautiful enough for anyone, and has a satisfactory amount of nudity (both front and rear), even with the hard stuff excised. Further, he displays the presence and poise to suggest that with a little work, he could make an excellent "legitimate" actor, too.

There is even a cameo appearance by veteran character actor John Hoyt, whom dedicated film buffs will know from his many roles in both major films and "quickie" sci-fiers. (He was the Karloff-like mad scientist in "THE ATTACK OF THE PUPPET PEOPLE," for instance.) But the real acting honors still go to that horny 60-foot beast. Who can hate a monster who makes a grab for the hero, misses, and grumbles under his breath, "Aw, fuck!"

"FLESH GORDON" has something for everybody. A more ideal all-around adult entertainment would be hard to find. Don't miss it. ●





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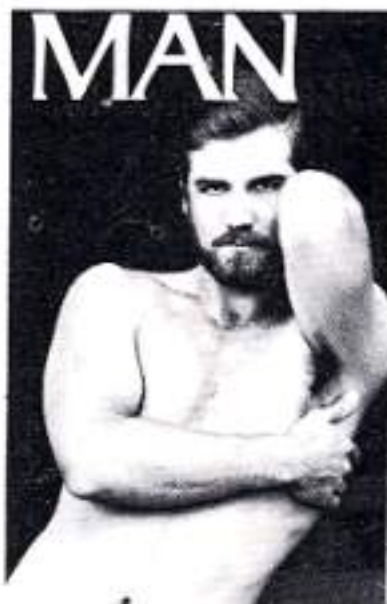
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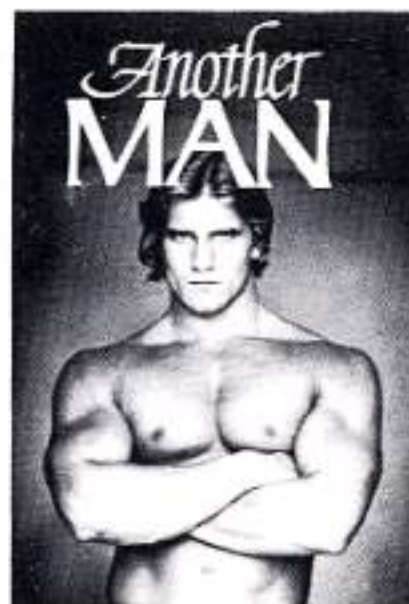
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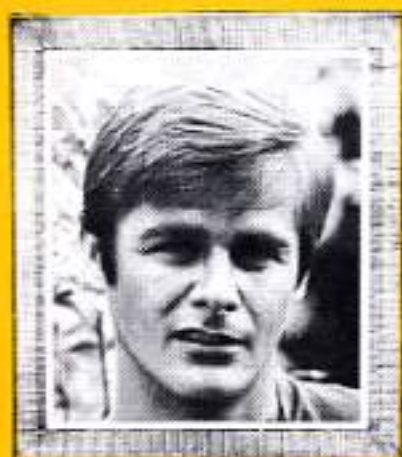
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